



## **Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School**

### **Teacher Evaluation Model**

#### **Purpose:**

Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School has a firm commitment to performance evaluation of school personnel, whatever their category and level, through the medium of a formalized system. The primary purpose of such evaluation is to assist personnel in professional development and achieving Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School goals. The procedures outlined in this policy apply to certificated personnel.

#### **Objectives:**

The formal performance evaluation system is designed to:

- Maintain or improve each employee's job satisfaction and morale by letting him/her know that the supervisor is interested in his/her job progress and personal development.
- Serve as a systematic guide for supervisors in planning each employee's further training.
- Assure considered opinion of an employee's performance and focus maximum attention on achievement of assigned duties.
- Assure considered opinion of an employee's adherence to the Harbor Method and strengthen its practice in the school.
- Assist in determining and recording special talents, skills, and capabilities that might otherwise not be noticed or recognized.
- Assist in planning personnel moves and placements that will best utilize each employee's capabilities.
- Provide an opportunity for each employee to discuss job problems and interests with his/her supervisor.
- Assemble substantiating data for use as a guide, although not necessarily the sole governing factor, for such purposes as wage adjustments, promotions, disciplinary action, and termination.

### **Teacher Evaluation Criteria:**

Certificated staff member evaluation will be aligned with minimum State standards and consist of a formative and a summative evaluation process. Sources of data to be included in the evaluation process include:

- Formal Evaluation(s)
- Informal Evaluation(s)
- Parental Input Surveys
- Student Achievement Measures

### **Formative Evaluation Process:**

The formative evaluation process will be based upon Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching and will include, at a minimum, the following general criteria upon which the performance evaluation system will be based:

- Planning and Preparation
- Learning Environment
- Instruction and Use of Assessment
- Professional Responsibilities

Certified staff shall also be evaluated based on their adherence to the Harbor method as outline in *Harbor Essentials for Educators*, the method on which the school is based.

**Formal Evaluation:** Each certificated staff member shall receive at least one (1) written evaluation to be completed by no later than January 31 for each annual contract year of employment.

- An Evaluation Form will be completed for each certificated employee. A copy will be given to the employee. The original will be retained by the administrator. This form should be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to indicate any significant changes in duties and/or responsibilities. The form is designed to increase planning and relate performance to assigned responsibilities through joint understanding between the administrator and the employee as to the job description and major performance objectives.
- The evaluation form will identify the sources of data used in conducting the evaluation.

**Informal Evaluation:** Periodic performance observations will be included in the evaluation process. These observations shall be used to evaluate the teacher's professionalism, performance, and adherence to the Harbor method.

The Administrator or his/her designee shall maintain a record of informal evaluations including times, dates, and any other pertinent action or information surrounding these events.

**Parental Input:** The formative evaluation process will include input from parents or guardians. This input shall include, but is not limited to, a parent survey soliciting parental input on the following Danielson Domains:

- Domain 4b. Maintaining Accurate Records
- Domain 4c. Communicating with Families

These surveys shall be made available to parents and posted on the school website. Completed surveys will be included in the Danielson Framework evaluation as “Artifacts of Teaching” and utilized in the evaluation of a teacher’s fulfillment of their professional responsibilities.

### **Summative Evaluation:**

By the end of each school year, the administrator or his/her designee shall conduct a summative evaluation for each teacher. The evaluator and teacher will review that staff member’s student achievement data for the year. Sources of data for the summative evaluation may include any of the Student Achievement Measures included in the State Department of Education Local Student Achievement Component, but must include standardized test scores and teacher grades.

The evaluator and teacher will use student achievement data to review and/or revise the objectives outlined in the formative evaluation process. This summative evaluation process may also be used to allocate local pay-for-performance funds.

Upon completion of the summative evaluation process, the completed evaluation form shall be signed by the evaluator and the teacher, and filed in the teacher’s personnel file.

### **Additional Evaluation Procedures:**

**Counseling Sessions:** Counseling sessions between supervisors and employees may be scheduled periodically. During these sessions, an open dialogue should occur which allows the exchange of performance-oriented information. The employee should be informed of how he/she has performed to date. In the case of derogatory comments, the employee should be informed of the steps necessary to improve performance to the desired level. Counseling sessions may include, but not be limited to, the following: job responsibilities, performance of duties, and attendance. A memorandum for record will be prepared following each counseling session and maintained by the supervisor.

**Meeting with the Employee:** Each formal evaluation shall include a meeting with the affected employee. At the scheduled meeting with the employee, the evaluator will:

- Discuss the evaluation with the employee, emphasizing strong and weak points in job performance. Commend the employee for a job well done if applicable and discuss specific corrective action if warranted. Set mutual goals for the employee to reach before the next performance evaluation. Recommendations should specifically state methods to correct weaknesses and/or prepare the employee for future promotions.

- Inform the employee that he/she may turn in a written rebuttal of any portion of the evaluation within seven (7) days and outline the process for rebuttal. Have the employee sign the evaluation form indicating that he/she has been given a copy and initial after evaluator's comments.

**Rebuttals:** Within seven (7) days from the date of the evaluation meeting with their evaluator, the employee may file a written rebuttal of any portion of the evaluation form. The written rebuttal shall state the specific content of the evaluation form with which the employee disagrees and a statement of the reason(s) for disagreement. The rebuttal shall be initialed by both the staff member and the evaluator and attached to the evaluation form to be placed in his/her personnel file.

**Remediation:** The administrator may target areas of weakness identified during the evaluation process for remediation. The purpose of this remediation is to improve teacher performance and prevent further action from becoming necessary.

### **Action**

In the event of unsatisfactory performance by a certificated staff member, the staff member may be subject to probation, contract renewal at a reduced rate of pay, contract non-renewal, or termination. All action taken as a result of an evaluation shall comply with the requirements and procedures established by State law.

### **Evaluator:**

The **Administrator**, or the Administrator's designee, shall have the overall responsibility for the administration and monitoring of the Performance Evaluation Program and will ensure the fairness and efficiency of its execution including:

- Distributing proper forms in a timely manner.
- Ensuring completed forms are returned for filing by a specified date.
- Reviewing forms for completeness.
- Identifying discrepancies.
- Ensuring proper safeguard and filing of completed forms.
- Conducting ongoing training for evaluators and teachers on the school's evaluation standards, forms, and process.
- Conducting an ongoing review of the school's Performance Evaluation Program that includes stakeholder input from teachers, Board members, administrators, and other interested parties.
- Ensuring remediation for employees that receive evaluations indicating that remediation would be an appropriate course of action.

Each year, the district shall provide funding for administrative professional development in evaluation.

The **Evaluator** has the responsibility for:

- Continuously observing and evaluating an employee's job performance.
- Holding periodic counseling sessions with each employee to discuss job performance.
- Completing Performance Evaluation Forms as required.

No individual may be designated as an evaluator without having first received training in the Danielson Framework and the district's state approved evaluation model.

#### **Evaluation Criteria for Other Certificated Staff:**

Certificated staff who are not classroom teachers or administrators, such as a school librarian or nurse, shall receive at least one (1) written evaluation to be completed by no later than January 31 for each annual contract year of employment. This written evaluation shall be based on periodic informal observations and at least one formal observation.

#### **Administrator Evaluation Criteria:**

The Administrator shall receive at least one (1) written evaluation to be completed by no later than the last day of June for each annual contract year of employment.

#### **Formative and Summative Evaluation Processes:**

No later than the last day of September of each annual contract year, the administrator shall provide the board of directors with a list of objectives for the coming school year and their alignment with the school's mission and vision. He/she may also provide supporting data and evidence as to why these objectives should be emphasized.

The administrator shall periodically update the board on the status of those objectives. The board of directors shall also provide periodic feedback to the administrator on his/her fulfillment of those objectives.

No later than the last day of June for each annual contract year, the administrator shall provide the board with evidence of progress toward the fulfillment of the objectives set for that school year. This evidence shall include, but not be limited to, parent input, student achievement data, and data gathered in the teacher evaluation process.

The board of directors shall review the administrator's objectives and evidence and evaluate the administrator's progress toward those objectives. The board will produce a formal, written evaluation of the administrator's performance and the data presented shall be used in the development of future objectives including but not limited to those involving curriculum, instruction, finance, and professional development.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of the Teacher Evaluation Model**

The administrator shall have primary responsibility for monitoring, evaluating, and revising the teacher evaluation model. Formal evaluations shall include a request for feedback on the evaluation process from certified staff. The administrator shall present any revisions to the board of directors for feedback and approval. Other interested parties shall also have the opportunity to provide input by addressing the board of directors at a board meeting.

### **Professional Development and Training**

All certified staff and the administrator shall participate in training on the district's state approved evaluation model, including the standards, tools, and processes. This training shall be provided and funded by the district at least once every contract year. This training shall be conducted during professional development days and/or during faculty and administrative meetings.



## Local Student Achievement Component

1. End-of-Course Assessments (EOCs)

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2. Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI)

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3. Disaggregated Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) data

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4. Graduation Rate

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5. Dropout Rate

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6. Percent of Graduates Attending Postsecondary or Entering Military

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7. ACT scores

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8. SAT scores

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9. Make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

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10. Number of Concurrent Credit or AP Courses Successfully Complete ("C" or better)

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11. Pass College Placement Exams

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12. Curriculum-based measure (i.e. teacher-developed test, AIMSweb, Dibels, etc.)

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13. Percentage of students involved in extracurricular activities (i.e. FFA, student council, etc.)

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14. Class Projects

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15. Portfolios

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16. Special Assignments (such as science fairs, robotics competitions, etc.)

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17. Parent Involvement

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18. Teacher grades

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19. Improved rates of attendance

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## Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School Parent/Guardian Input Survey

*Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School places great emphasis on communication with families. For each of the following questions, please select one response that best describes your child's teacher as they have fulfilled their professional responsibilities.*

1. Which of the following best describes the way in which your teacher communicates information about their class?

- ☐ **Distinguished:** Teacher provides frequent information to parents, as appropriate, about the class. Students participate in preparing materials for their families, i.e. homework, newsletters.
- ☐ **Proficient:** Teacher provides frequent information to parents, as appropriate, about the class.
- ☐ **Basic:** Teacher participates in the school's activities for parent communication but offers little additional information.
- ☐ Teacher provides little information about their class to families.

2. Which of the following best describes the way in which your teacher communicates information about individual students?

- ☐ **Distinguished:** Teacher provides information to parents frequently on both positive and negative aspects of student progress. Response to parent concerns is handled with great sensitivity.
- ☐ **Proficient:** Teacher communicates with parents about students' progress on a regular basis and is available as needed to respond to parent concerns.
- ☐ **Basic:** Teacher adheres to the school's required procedures for communicating to parents. Responses to parent concerns are minimal.
- ☐ Teacher provides minimal information to parents and does not respond or responds insensitively to parent concerns about students.

3. Which of the following best describes the manner in which your teacher engages families in the learning process?

- ☐ **Distinguished:** Teacher's efforts to engage families in learning are frequent and successful. Parents are strongly supported in their efforts to educate their children.
- ☐ **Proficient:** Teacher's efforts to engage families in the learning process are frequent and successful.
- ☐ **Basic:** Teacher makes modest and inconsistently successful attempts to engage families in the learning process.
- ☐ Teacher makes no attempt to engage families in the learning process, or such attempts are inappropriate.

4. Which of the following best describes the manner in which your child's teacher maintains accurate records?

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Distinguished:** Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments is fully effective and current. Completed assignments are entered into the grade book in a timely manner. Most students participate in the monitoring of their work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Proficient:** Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments is fully effective. Completed assignments are entered into the grade book in a relatively timely manner. Students have the opportunity to monitor their own work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Basic:** Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments is in place for all students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments is in disarray.

5. Which of the following best describes the manner in which your child's teacher communicates student progress and/or concerns with you, the parent/guardian?

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Distinguished:** Teacher regularly updates parents on student progress and/or concerns including regular progress reports. Parents are contacted before minor concerns become major concerns.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Proficient:** Teacher regularly updates parents on student progress and/or concerns.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Basic:** Teacher responds to parent questions or concerns, but rarely initiates contact with parents.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher avoids contact with parents and rarely responds to parent questions or concerns.

6. Which of the following best describes the manner in which your child's teacher models the Harbor Method?

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Distinguished:** Teacher is an ideal model of the Harbor method by treating students with kindness and maintaining high expectations for student behavior and performance. Students feel safe and challenged each day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Proficient:** Teacher effectively models the Harbor method by treating students with kindness and maintaining high expectations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Basic:** Teacher has a basic understanding of the Harbor method. He/she treats students with kindness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher has little or no knowledge of the Harbor Method and does not model kindness or high expectations.

(Please Print)

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Please note that anonymous surveys cannot be accepted.*

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION Component 1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

**Elements:** Knowledge of content and the structure of the discipline • Knowledge of prerequisite relationships • Knowledge of content-related pedagogy

| ELEMENT   | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE  |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   | BASIC   | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED   |
| <b>Knowledge of content and the structure of the discipline</b> | In planning and practice, teacher makes content errors or does not correct errors made by students.                                   | Teacher is familiar with the important concepts in the discipline but may display lack of awareness of how these concepts relate to one another.              | Teacher displays solid knowledge of the important concepts in the discipline and how these relate to one another.         | Teacher displays extensive knowledge of the important concepts in the discipline and how these relate both to one another and to other disciplines.   |
| <b>Knowledge of prerequisite relationships</b>                  | Teacher's plans and practice display little understanding of prerequisite relationships important to student learning of the content. | Teacher's plans and practice indicate some awareness of prerequisite relationships, although such knowledge may be inaccurate or incomplete.                  | Teacher's plans and practice reflect accurate understanding of prerequisite relationships among topics and concepts.      | Teacher's plans and practices reflect understanding of prerequisite relationships among topics and concepts and a link to necessary cognitive structures by students to ensure understanding. |
| <b>Knowledge of content-related pedagogy</b>                    | Teacher displays little or no understanding of the range of pedagogical approaches suitable to student learning of the content.       | Teacher's plans and practice reflect a limited range of pedagogical approaches or some approaches that are not suitable to the discipline or to the students. | Teacher's plans and practice reflect familiarity with a wide range of effective pedagogical approaches in the discipline. | Teacher's plans and practice reflect familiarity with a wide range of effective pedagogical approaches in the discipline, anticipating student misconceptions.                                |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION Component 1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students

**Elements:** Knowledge of child and adolescent development • Knowledge of the learning process • Knowledge of students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency • Knowledge of students' interests and cultural heritage • Knowledge of students' special needs

| ELEMENT   | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE  |  |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|--|
|   |   | BASIC  | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Knowledge of child and adolescent development</b>                      | Teacher displays little or no knowledge of the developmental characteristics of the age group.  | Teacher displays partial knowledge of the developmental characteristics of the age group.  | Teacher displays accurate understanding of the typical developmental characteristics of the age group, as well as exceptions to the general patterns.   | In addition to accurate knowledge of the typical developmental characteristics of the age group and exceptions to the general patterns, teacher displays knowledge of the extent to which individual students follow the general patterns. |
| <b>Knowledge of the learning process</b>                                  | Teacher sees no value in understanding how students learn and does not seek such information.   | Teacher recognizes the value of knowing how students learn, but this knowledge is limited or outdated.   | Teacher's knowledge of how students learn is accurate and current. Teacher applies this knowledge to the class as a whole and to groups of students.    | Teacher displays extensive and subtle understanding of how students learn and applies this knowledge to individual students.   |
| <b>Knowledge of students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency</b> | Teacher displays little or no knowledge of students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency and does not indicate that such knowledge is valuable. | Teacher recognizes the value of understanding students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency but displays this knowledge only for the class as a whole. | Teacher recognizes the value of understanding students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency and displays this knowledge for groups of students. | Teacher displays understanding of individual students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency and has a strategy for maintaining such information.  |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION Component 1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students *(continued)*

**Elements:** Knowledge of child and adolescent development • Knowledge of the learning process • Knowledge of students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency • Knowledge of students' interests and cultural heritage • Knowledge of students' special needs

| ELEMENT   | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |  |   |  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
|   |  | BASIC  | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Knowledge of students' interests and cultural heritage</b> | Teacher displays little or no knowledge of students' interests or cultural heritage and does not indicate that such knowledge is valuable. | Teacher recognizes the value of understanding students' interests and cultural heritage but displays this knowledge only for the class as a whole.       | Teacher recognizes the value of understanding students' interests and cultural heritage and displays this knowledge for groups of students. | Teacher recognizes the value of understanding students' interests and cultural heritage and displays this knowledge for individual students. |
| <b>Knowledge of students' special needs</b>                   | Teacher displays little or no understanding of students' special learning or medical needs or why such knowledge is important.             | Teacher displays awareness of the importance of knowing students' special learning or medical needs, but such knowledge may be incomplete or inaccurate. | Teacher is aware of students' special learning and medical needs.   | Teacher possesses information about each student's learning and medical needs, collecting such information from a variety of sources.        |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION Component 1c: Setting Instructional Outcomes

**Elements:** Value, sequence, and alignment • Clarity • Balance • Suitability for diverse learners

| ELEMENT                                 | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE  |  |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|--|
|   |   | BASIC  | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Value, sequence, and alignment</b>   | Outcomes represent low expectations for students and lack of rigor. They do not reflect important learning in the discipline or a connection to a sequence of learning. | Outcomes represent moderately high expectations and rigor. Some reflect important learning in the discipline and at least some connection to a sequence of learning. | Most outcomes represent high expectations and rigor and important learning in the discipline. They are connected to a sequence of learning.   | All outcomes represent high expectations and rigor and important learning in the discipline. They are connected to a sequence of learning both in the discipline and in related disciplines. |
| <b>Clarity</b>                          | Outcomes are either not clear or are stated as activities, not as student learning. Outcomes do not permit viable methods of assessment.                                | Outcomes are only moderately clear or consist of a combination of outcomes and activities. Some outcomes do not permit viable methods of assessment.                 | All the instructional outcomes are clear, written in the form of student learning. Most suggest viable methods of assessment.   | All the outcomes are clear, written in the form of student learning, and permit viable methods of assessment.  |
| <b>Balance</b>                          | Outcomes reflect only one type of learning and only one discipline or strand.   | Outcomes reflect several types of learning, but teacher has made no attempt at coordination or integration.  | Outcomes reflect several different types of learning and opportunities for coordination.  | Where appropriate, outcomes reflect several different types of learning and opportunities for both coordination and integration.   |
| <b>Suitability for diverse learners</b> | Outcomes are not suitable for the class or are not based on any assessment of student needs.  | Most of the outcomes are suitable for most of the students in the class based on global assessments of student learning.   | Most of the outcomes are suitable for all students in the class and are based on evidence of student proficiency. However, the needs of some individual students may not be accommodated. | Outcomes are based on a comprehensive assessment of student learning and take into account the varying needs of individual students or groups.   |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION Component 1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

**Elements:** Resources for classroom use • Resources to extend content knowledge and pedagogy • Resources for students

| ELEMENT   | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
|   |  | BASIC   | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED   |
| <b>Resources for classroom use</b>                        | Teacher is unaware of resources for classroom use available through the school or district.                            | Teacher displays awareness of resources available for classroom use through the school or district but no knowledge of resources available more broadly.                            | Teacher displays awareness of resources available for classroom use through the school or district and some familiarity with resources external to the school and on the Internet.                            | Teacher's knowledge of resources for classroom use is extensive, including those available through the school or district, in the community, through professional organizations and universities, and on the Internet.                            |
| <b>Resources to extend content knowledge and pedagogy</b> | Teacher is unaware of resources to enhance content and pedagogical knowledge available through the school or district. | Teacher displays awareness of resources to enhance content and pedagogical knowledge available through the school or district but no knowledge of resources available more broadly. | Teacher displays awareness of resources to enhance content and pedagogical knowledge available through the school or district and some familiarity with resources external to the school and on the Internet. | Teacher's knowledge of resources to enhance content and pedagogical knowledge is extensive, including those available through the school or district, in the community, through professional organizations and universities, and on the Internet. |
| <b>Resources for students</b>                             | Teacher is unaware of resources for students available through the school or district.                                 | Teacher displays awareness of resources for students available through the school or district but no knowledge of resources available more broadly.                                 | Teacher displays awareness of resources for students available through the school or district and some familiarity with resources external to the school and on the Internet.                                 | Teacher's knowledge of resources for students is extensive, including those available through the school or district, in the community, and on the Internet.  |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION Component 1e: Designing Coherent Instruction

**Elements:** Learning activities • Instructional materials and resources • Instructional groups • Lesson and unit structure

| ELEMENT                                      | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |  |   |  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
|  |  | BASIC  | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Learning activities</b>                   | Learning activities are not suitable to students or to instructional outcomes and are not designed to engage students in active intellectual activity.                     | Only some of the learning activities are suitable to students or to the instructional outcomes. Some represent a moderate cognitive challenge, but with no differentiation for different students. | All of the learning activities are suitable to students or to the instructional outcomes, and most represent significant cognitive challenge, with some differentiation for different groups of students. | Learning activities are highly suitable to diverse learners and support the instructional outcomes. They are all designed to engage students in high-level cognitive activity and are differentiated, as appropriate, for individual learners.                                   |
| <b>Instructional materials and resources</b> | Materials and resources are not suitable for students and do not support the instructional outcomes or engage students in meaningful learning.                             | Some of the materials and resources are suitable to students, support the instructional outcomes, and engage students in meaningful learning.  | All of the materials and resources are suitable to students, support the instructional outcomes, and are designed to engage students in meaningful learning.  | All of the materials and resources are suitable to students, support the instructional outcomes, and are designed to engage students in meaningful learning. There is evidence of appropriate use of technology and of student participation in selecting or adapting materials. |
| <b>Instructional groups</b>                  | Instructional groups do not support the instructional outcomes and offer no variety.   | Instructional groups partially support the instructional outcomes, with an effort at providing some variety.   | Instructional groups are varied as appropriate to the students and the different instructional outcomes.  | Instructional groups are varied as appropriate to the students and the different instructional outcomes. There is evidence of student choice in selecting the different patterns of instructional groups.  |
| <b>Lesson and unit structure</b>             | The lesson or unit has no clearly defined structure, or the structure is chaotic. Activities do not follow an organized progression, and time allocations are unrealistic. | The lesson or unit has a recognizable structure, although the structure is not uniformly maintained throughout. Progression of activities is uneven, with most time allocations reasonable.        | The lesson or unit has a clearly defined structure around which activities are organized. Progression of activities is even, with reasonable time allocations.  | The lesson's or unit's structure is clear and allows for different pathways according to diverse student needs. The progression of activities is highly coherent.  |

SOURCE: Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Adapted with permission.

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION

#### Component 1f: Designing Student Assessments

**Elements:** Congruence with instructional outcomes • Criteria and standards • Design of formative assessments • Use for planning

| ELEMENT                                       | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE  |  |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|--|
|   |   | BASIC  | PROFICIENT   | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Congruence with instructional outcomes</b> | Assessment procedures are not congruent with instructional outcomes.            | Some of the instructional outcomes are assessed through the proposed approach, but many are not.               | All the instructional outcomes are assessed through the approach to assessment; assessment methodologies may have been adapted for groups of students. | Proposed approach to assessment is fully aligned with the instructional outcomes in both content and process. Assessment methodologies have been adapted for individual students, as needed. |
| <b>Criteria and standards</b>                 | Proposed approach contains no criteria or standards.                            | Assessment criteria and standards have been developed, but they are not clear.                                 | Assessment criteria and standards are clear.   | Assessment criteria and standards are clear; there is evidence that the students contributed to their development.   |
| <b>Design of formative assessments</b>        | Teacher has no plan to incorporate formative assessment in the lesson or unit.  | Approach to the use of formative assessment is rudimentary, including only some of the instructional outcomes. | Teacher has a well-developed strategy to using formative assessment and has designed particular approaches to be used.                                 | Approach to using formative assessment is well designed and includes student as well as teacher use of the assessment information.   |
| <b>Use for planning</b>                       | Teacher has no plans to use assessment results in designing future instruction. | Teacher plans to use assessment results to plan for future instruction for the class as a whole.               | Teacher plans to use assessment results to plan for future instruction for groups of students.   | Teacher plans to use assessment results to plan future instruction for individual students.  |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT Component 2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

**Elements:** Teacher interaction with students • Student interactions with other students

| ELEMENT   | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE  |  |  |   |
|---|---|--|--|---|
|   |   | BASIC  | PROFICIENT   | DISTINGUISHED   |
| <b>Teacher interaction with students</b>        | Teacher interaction with at least some students is negative, demeaning, sarcastic, or inappropriate to the age or culture of the students. Students exhibit disrespect for the teacher. | Teacher-student interactions are generally appropriate but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, or disregard for students' cultures. Students exhibit only minimal respect for the teacher. | Teacher-student interactions are friendly and demonstrate general caring and respect. Such interactions are appropriate to the age and cultures of the students. Students exhibit respect for the teacher. | Teacher interactions with students reflect genuine respect and caring for individuals as well as groups of students. Students appear to trust the teacher with sensitive information. |
| <b>Student interactions with other students</b> | Student interactions are characterized by conflict, sarcasm, or put-downs.  | Students do not demonstrate disrespect for one another.  | Student interactions are generally polite and respectful.  | Students demonstrate genuine caring for one another and monitor one another's treatment of peers, correcting classmates respectfully when needed.                                     |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT Component 2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning

**Elements:** Importance of the content • Expectations for learning and achievement • Student pride in work

| ELEMENT  | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | BASIC  | PROFICIENT   | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Importance of the content</b>                 | Teacher or students convey a negative attitude toward the content, suggesting that it is not important or has been mandated by others.                 | Teacher communicates importance of the work but with little conviction and only minimal apparent buy-in by the students.                             | Teacher conveys genuine enthusiasm for the content, and students demonstrate consistent commitment to its value.           | Students demonstrate through their active participation, curiosity, and taking initiative that they value the importance of the content.   |
| <b>Expectations for learning and achievement</b> | Instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions convey low expectations for at least some students.                     | Instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions convey only modest expectations for student learning and achievement. | Instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions convey high expectations for most students. | Instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions convey high expectations for all students. Students appear to have internalized these expectations. |
| <b>Student pride in work</b>                     | Students demonstrate little or no pride in their work. They seem to be motivated by the desire to complete a task rather than to do high-quality work. | Students minimally accept the responsibility to do good work but invest little of their energy into its quality.                                     | Students accept the teacher's insistence on work of high quality and demonstrate pride in that work.                       | Students demonstrate attention to detail and take obvious pride in their work, initiating improvements in it by, for example, revising drafts on their own or helping peers.       |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT Component 2c: Managing Classroom Procedures

**Elements:** Management of instructional groups • Management of transitions • Management of materials and supplies •  
Performance of noninstructional duties • Supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals

| ELEMENT  | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |   |   |  |
|--|--|---|---|--|
|  |  | BASIC   | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Management of instructional groups</b>              | Students not working with the teacher are not productively engaged in learning.                        | Students in only some groups are productively engaged in learning while unsupervised by the teacher.                      | Small-group work is well organized, and most students are productively engaged in learning while unsupervised by the teacher. | Small-group work is well organized, and students are productively engaged at all times, with students assuming responsibility for productivity.  |
| <b>Management of transitions</b>                       | Transitions are chaotic, with much time lost between activities or lesson segments.                    | Only some transitions are efficient, resulting in some loss of instructional time.  | Transitions occur smoothly, with little loss of instructional time.   | Transitions are seamless, with students assuming responsibility in ensuring their efficient operation.   |
| <b>Management of materials and supplies</b>            | Materials and supplies are handled inefficiently, resulting in significant loss of instructional time. | Routines for handling materials and supplies function moderately well, but with some loss of instructional time.          | Routines for handling materials and supplies occur smoothly, with little loss of instructional time.                          | Routines for handling materials and supplies are seamless, with students assuming some responsibility for smooth operation.                      |
| <b>Performance of noninstructional duties</b>          | Considerable instructional time is lost in performing noninstructional duties.                         | Systems for performing noninstructional duties are only fairly efficient, resulting in some loss of instructional time.   | Efficient systems for performing noninstructional duties are in place, resulting in minimal loss of instructional time.       | Systems for performing noninstructional duties are well established, with students assuming considerable responsibility for efficient operation. |
| <b>Supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals</b> | Volunteers and paraprofessionals have no clearly defined duties and are idle most of the time.         | Volunteers and paraprofessionals are productively engaged during portions of class time but require frequent supervision. | Volunteers and paraprofessionals are productively and independently engaged during the entire class.                          | Volunteers and paraprofessionals make a substantive contribution to the classroom environment.   |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT Component 2d: Managing Student Behavior

**Elements:** Expectations • Monitoring of student behavior • Response to student misbehavior

| ELEMENT                                | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|
|  |  | BASIC   | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED   |
| <b>Expectations</b>                    | No standards of conduct appear to have been established, or students are confused as to what the standards are.                            | Standards of conduct appear to have been established, and most students seem to understand them.                            | Standards of conduct are clear to all students.   | Standards of conduct are clear to all students and appear to have been developed with student participation.                                  |
| <b>Monitoring of student behavior</b>  | Student behavior is not monitored, and teacher is unaware of what the students are doing.  | Teacher is generally aware of student behavior but may miss the activities of some students.                                | Teacher is alert to student behavior at all times.  | Monitoring by teacher is subtle and preventive. Students monitor their own and their peers' behavior, correcting one another respectfully.    |
| <b>Response to student misbehavior</b> | Teacher does not respond to misbehavior, or the response is inconsistent, is overly repressive, or does not respect the student's dignity. | Teacher attempts to respond to student misbehavior but with uneven results, or there are no major infractions of the rules. | Teacher response to misbehavior is appropriate and successful and respects the student's dignity, or student behavior is generally appropriate. | Teacher response to misbehavior is highly effective and sensitive to students' individual needs, or student behavior is entirely appropriate. |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT Component 2e: Organizing Physical Space

**Elements:** Safety and accessibility • Arrangement of furniture and use of physical resources

| ELEMENT   | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE  |   |  |  |
|---|---|---|--|--|
|   |   | BASIC   | PROFICIENT   | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Safety and accessibility</b>                               | The classroom is unsafe, or learning is not accessible to some students.  | The classroom is safe, and at least essential learning is accessible to most students.                                  | The classroom is safe, and learning is equally accessible to all students.                                       | The classroom is safe, and students themselves ensure that all learning is equally accessible to all students.                       |
| <b>Arrangement of furniture and use of physical resources</b> | The furniture arrangement hinders the learning activities, or the teacher makes poor use of physical resources. | Teacher uses physical resources adequately. The furniture may be adjusted for a lesson, but with limited effectiveness. | Teacher uses physical resources skillfully, and the furniture arrangement is a resource for learning activities. | Both teacher and students use physical resources easily and skillfully, and students adjust the furniture to advance their learning. |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION

#### Component 3a: Communicating with Students

**Elements:** Expectations for learning • Directions and procedures • Explanations of content • Use of oral and written language

| ELEMENT                                 | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
|   |  | BASIC   | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED   |
| <b>Expectations for learning</b>        | Teacher's purpose in a lesson or unit is unclear to students.  | Teacher attempts to explain the instructional purpose, with limited success.  | Teacher's purpose for the lesson or unit is clear, including where it is situated within broader learning.  | Teacher makes the purpose of the lesson or unit clear, including where it is situated within broader learning, linking that purpose to student interests.   |
| <b>Directions and procedures</b>        | Teacher's directions and procedures are confusing to students.   | Teacher's directions and procedures are clarified after initial student confusion.  | Teacher's directions and procedures are clear to students.  | Teacher's directions and procedures are clear to students and anticipate possible student misunderstanding.   |
| <b>Explanations of content</b>          | Teacher's explanation of the content is unclear or confusing or uses inappropriate language.   | Teacher's explanation of the content is uneven; some is done skillfully, but other portions are difficult to follow.  | Teacher's explanation of content is appropriate and connects with students' knowledge and experience.   | Teacher's explanation of content is imaginative and connects with students' knowledge and experience. Students contribute to explaining concepts to their peers.  |
| <b>Use of oral and written language</b> | Teacher's spoken language is inaudible, or written language is illegible. Spoken or written language contains errors of grammar or syntax. Vocabulary may be inappropriate, vague, or used incorrectly, leaving students confused. | Teacher's spoken language is audible, and written language is legible. Both are used correctly and conform to standard English. Vocabulary is correct but limited or is not appropriate to the students' ages or backgrounds. | Teacher's spoken and written language is clear and correct and conforms to standard English. Vocabulary is appropriate to the students' ages and interests. | Teacher's spoken and written language is correct and conforms to standard English. It is also expressive, with well-chosen vocabulary that enriches the lesson. Teacher finds opportunities to extend students' vocabularies. |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION Component 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques

Elements: Quality of questions • Discussion techniques • Student participation

| ELEMENT                      | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE  |   |   |  |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
|                              |   | BASIC   | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Quality of questions</b>  | Teacher's questions are virtually all of poor quality, with low cognitive challenge and single correct responses, and they are asked in rapid succession. | Teacher's questions are a combination of low and high quality, posed in rapid succession. Only some invite a thoughtful response. | Most of the teacher's questions are of high quality. Adequate time is provided for students to respond. | Teacher's questions are of uniformly high quality, with adequate time for students to respond. Students formulate many questions.      |
| <b>Discussion techniques</b> | Interaction between teacher and students is predominantly recitation style, with the teacher mediating all questions and answers.                         | Teacher makes some attempt to engage students in genuine discussion rather than recitation, with uneven results.                  | Teacher creates a genuine discussion among students, stepping aside when appropriate.                   | Students assume considerable responsibility for the success of the discussion, initiating topics and making unsolicited contributions. |
| <b>Student participation</b> | A few students dominate the discussion.   | Teacher attempts to engage all students in the discussion, but with only limited success.   | Teacher successfully engages all students in the discussion.  | Students themselves ensure that all voices are heard in the discussion.  |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION Component 3c: Engaging Students in Learning

**Elements:** Activities and assignments • Grouping of students • Instructional materials and resources • Structure and pacing

| ELEMENT                                      | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
|  |  | BASIC   | PROFICIENT   | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Activities and assignments</b>            | Activities and assignments are inappropriate for students' age or background. Students are not mentally engaged in them. | Activities and assignments are appropriate to some students and engage them mentally, but others are not engaged.   | Most activities and assignments are appropriate to students, and almost all students are cognitively engaged in exploring content.   | All students are cognitively engaged in the activities and assignments in their exploration of content. Students initiate or adapt activities and projects to enhance their understanding.                               |
| <b>Grouping of students</b>                  | Instructional groups are inappropriate to the students or to the instructional outcomes.                                 | Instructional groups are only partially appropriate to the students or only moderately successful in advancing the instructional outcomes of the lesson.    | Instructional groups are productive and fully appropriate to the students or to the instructional purposes of the lesson.            | Instructional groups are productive and fully appropriate to the students or to the instructional purposes of the lesson. Students take the initiative to influence the formation or adjustment of instructional groups. |
| <b>Instructional materials and resources</b> | Instructional materials and resources are unsuitable to the instructional purposes or do not engage students mentally.   | Instructional materials and resources are only partially suitable to the instructional purposes, or students are only partially mentally engaged with them. | Instructional materials and resources are suitable to the instructional purposes and engage students mentally.                       | Instructional materials and resources are suitable to the instructional purposes and engage students mentally. Students initiate the choice, adaptation, or creation of materials to enhance their learning.             |
| <b>Structure and pacing</b>                  | The lesson has no clearly defined structure, or the pace of the lesson is too slow or rushed, or both.                   | The lesson has a recognizable structure, although it is not uniformly maintained throughout the lesson. Pacing of the lesson is inconsistent.               | The lesson has a clearly defined structure around which the activities are organized. Pacing of the lesson is generally appropriate. | The lesson's structure is highly coherent, allowing for reflection and closure. Pacing of the lesson is appropriate for all students.  |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION

#### Component 3d: Using Assessment in Instruction

**Elements:** Assessment criteria • Monitoring of student learning • Feedback to students • Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress

| ELEMENT   | L E V E L   O F   P E R F O R M A N C E   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|   |   | BASIC   | PROFICIENT   | DISTINGUISHED   |
| <b>Assessment criteria</b>                                | Students are not aware of the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated. | Students know some of the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated.                   | Students are fully aware of the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated.                              | Students are fully aware of the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated and have contributed to the development of the criteria.                                       |
| <b>Monitoring of student learning</b>                     | Teacher does not monitor student learning in the curriculum.  | Teacher monitors the progress of the class as a whole but elicits no diagnostic information.                          | Teacher monitors the progress of groups of students in the curriculum, making limited use of diagnostic prompts to elicit information. | Teacher actively and systematically elicits diagnostic information from individual students regarding their understanding and monitors the progress of individual students.                             |
| <b>Feedback to students</b>                               | Teacher's feedback to students is of poor quality and not provided in a timely manner.                  | Teacher's feedback to students is uneven, and its timeliness is inconsistent.   | Teacher's feedback to students is timely and of consistently high quality.   | Teacher's feedback to students is timely and of consistently high quality, and students make use of the feedback in their learning.   |
| <b>Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress</b> | Students do not engage in self-assessment or monitoring of progress.                                    | Students occasionally assess the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards. | Students frequently assess and monitor the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards.        | Students not only frequently assess and monitor the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards but also make active use of that information in their learning. |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION Component 3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

Elements: Lesson adjustment • Response to students • Persistence

| ELEMENT                     | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |  |  |   |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|---|
|                             |  | BASIC  | PROFICIENT   | DISTINGUISHED   |
| <b>Lesson adjustment</b>    | Teacher adheres rigidly to an instructional plan, even when a change is clearly needed.                                      | Teacher attempts to adjust a lesson when needed, with only partially successful results.   | Teacher makes a minor adjustment to a lesson, and the adjustment occurs smoothly.  | Teacher successfully makes a major adjustment to a lesson when needed.  |
| <b>Response to students</b> | Teacher ignores or brushes aside students' questions or interests.   | Teacher attempts to accommodate students' questions or interests, although the pacing of the lesson is disrupted.                        | Teacher successfully accommodates students' questions or interests.  | Teacher seizes a major opportunity to enhance learning, building on student interests or a spontaneous event.   |
| <b>Persistence</b>          | When a student has difficulty learning, the teacher either gives up or blames the student or the student's home environment. | Teacher accepts responsibility for the success of all students but has only a limited repertoire of instructional strategies to draw on. | Teacher persists in seeking approaches for students who have difficulty learning, drawing on a broad repertoire of strategies. | Teacher persists in seeking effective approaches for students who need help, using an extensive repertoire of strategies and soliciting additional resources from the school. |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Component 4a: Reflecting on Teaching

Elements: Accuracy • Use in future teaching

| ELEMENT                       | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE  |  |  |   |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
|                               |   | BASIC  | PROFICIENT   | DISTINGUISHED   |
| <b>Accuracy</b>               | Teacher does not know whether a lesson was effective or achieved its instructional outcomes, or teacher profoundly misjudges the success of a lesson. | Teacher has a generally accurate impression of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which instructional outcomes were met. | Teacher makes an accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which it achieved its instructional outcomes and can cite general references to support the judgment. | Teacher makes a thoughtful and accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which it achieved its instructional outcomes, citing many specific examples from the lesson and weighing the relative strengths of each. |
| <b>Use in future teaching</b> | Teacher has no suggestions for how a lesson could be improved another time the lesson is taught.  | Teacher makes general suggestions about how a lesson could be improved another time the lesson is taught.                        | Teacher makes a few specific suggestions of what could be tried another time the lesson is taught.   | Drawing on an extensive repertoire of skills, teacher offers specific alternative actions, complete with the probable success of different courses of action.   |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES Component 4b: Maintaining Accurate Records

**Elements:** Student completion of assignments • Student progress in learning • Noninstructional records

| ELEMENT                                  | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
|  |  | BASIC  | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED   |
| <b>Student completion of assignments</b> | Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments is in disarray.                | Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments is rudimentary and only partially effective. | Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments is fully effective. | Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments is fully effective. Students participate in maintaining the records.                        |
| <b>Student progress in learning</b>      | Teacher has no system for maintaining information on student progress in learning, or the system is in disarray. | Teacher's system for maintaining information on student progress in learning is rudimentary and only partially effective.      | Teacher's system for maintaining information on student progress in learning is fully effective.      | Teacher's system for maintaining information on student progress in learning is fully effective. Students contribute information and participate in interpreting the records. |
| <b>Noninstructional records</b>          | Teacher's records for noninstructional activities are in disarray, resulting in errors and confusion.            | Teacher's records for non-instructional activities are adequate, but they require frequent monitoring to avoid errors.         | Teacher's system for maintaining information on noninstructional activities is fully effective.       | Teacher's system for maintaining information on noninstructional activities is highly effective, and students contribute to its maintenance.                                  |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Component 4c: Communicating with Families

**Elements:** Information about the instructional program • Information about individual students • Engagement of families in the instructional program

| ELEMENT  | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | BASIC  | PROFICIENT   | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Information about the instructional program</b>         | Teacher provides little or no information about the instructional program to families.   | Teacher participates in the school's activities for family communication but offers little additional information.   | Teacher provides frequent information to families, as appropriate, about the instructional program.  | Teacher provides frequent information to families, as appropriate, about the instructional program.<br>Students participate in preparing materials for their families.   |
| <b>Information about individual students</b>               | Teacher provides minimal information to families about individual students, or the communication is inappropriate. Teacher does not respond, or responds insensitively, to family concerns about students. | Teacher adheres to the school's required procedures for communicating with families. Responses to family concerns are minimal or may reflect occasional insensitivity. | Teacher communicates with families about students' progress on a regular basis, respecting cultural norms, and is available as needed to respond to family concerns. | Teacher provides information to families frequently on student progress, with students contributing to the design of the system. Response to family concerns is handled with great professional and sensitivity. |
| <b>Engagement of families in the instructional program</b> | Teacher makes no attempt to engage families in the instructional program, or such efforts are inappropriate.   | Teacher makes modest and partially successful attempts to engage families in the instructional program.  | Teacher's efforts to engage families in the instructional program are frequent and successful.   | Teacher's efforts to engage families in the instructional program are frequent and successful. Students contribute ideas for projects that could be enhanced by family participation.                            |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES Component 4d: Participating in a Professional Community

**Elements:** Relationships with colleagues • Involvement in a culture of professional inquiry • Service to the school • Participation in school and district projects

| ELEMENT   | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE  |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
|   |   | BASIC   | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Relationships with colleagues</b>                    | Teacher's relationships with colleagues are negative or self-serving.                             | Teacher maintains cordial relationships with colleagues to fulfill duties that the school or district requires. | Relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation.                    | Relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation. Teacher takes initiative in assuming leadership among the faculty.                      |
| <b>Involvement in a culture of professional inquiry</b> | Teacher avoids participation in a culture of inquiry, resisting opportunities to become involved. | Teacher becomes involved in the school's culture of inquiry when invited to do so.                              | Teacher actively participates in a culture of professional inquiry.                                   | Teacher takes a leadership role in promoting a culture of professional inquiry.  |
| <b>Service to the school</b>                            | Teacher avoids becoming involved in school events.  | Teacher participates in school events when specifically asked.  | Teacher volunteers to participate in school events, making a substantial contribution.                | Teacher volunteers to participate in school events, making a substantial contribution, and assumes a leadership role in at least one aspect of school life.                |
| <b>Participation in school and district projects</b>    | Teacher avoids becoming involved in school and district projects.                                 | Teacher participates in school and district projects when specifically asked.                                   | Teacher volunteers to participate in school and district projects, making a substantial contribution. | Teacher volunteers to participate in school and district projects, making a substantial contribution, and assumes a leadership role in a major school or district project. |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES Component 4e: Growing and Developing Professionally

**Elements:** Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill • Receptivity to feedback from colleagues • Service to the profession

| ELEMENT   | LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
|   |  | BASIC  | PROFICIENT   | DISTINGUISHED  |
| <b>Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill</b> | Teacher engages in no professional development activities to enhance knowledge or skill.                 | Teacher participates in professional activities to a limited extent when they are convenient.                              | Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.                   | Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development and makes a systematic effort to conduct action research. |
| <b>Receptivity to feedback from colleagues</b>                | Teacher resists feedback on teaching performance from either supervisors or more experienced colleagues. | Teacher accepts, with some reluctance, feedback on teaching performance from both supervisors and professional colleagues. | Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration. | Teacher seeks out feedback on teaching from both supervisors and colleagues.   |
| <b>Service to the profession</b>                              | Teacher makes no effort to share knowledge with others or to assume professional responsibilities.       | Teacher finds limited ways to contribute to the profession.  | Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.  | Teacher initiates important activities to contribute to the profession.  |

## Levels of Performance-Observation Rubrics

### DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Component 4f: Showing Professionalism

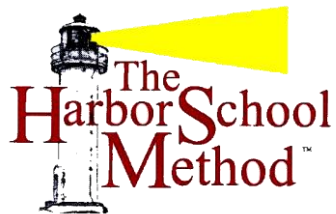
**Elements:** Integrity and ethical conduct • Service to students • Advocacy • Decision making • Compliance with school and district regulations

| ELEMENT  | L E V E L   O F   P E R F O R M A N C E  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
|  |  | BASIC  | PROFICIENT  | DISTINGUISHED   |
| <b>Integrity and ethical conduct</b>                   | Teacher displays dishonesty in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public.               | Teacher is honest in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public.                               | Teacher displays high standards of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public. | Teacher can be counted on to hold the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality and takes a leadership role with colleagues.                                     |
| <b>Service to students</b>                             | Teacher is not alert to students' needs.   | Teacher's attempts to serve students are inconsistent.   | Teacher is active in serving students.  | Teacher is highly proactive in serving students, seeking out resources when needed.   |
| <b>Advocacy</b>  | Teacher contributes to school practices that result in some students being ill served by the school. | Teacher does not knowingly contribute to some students being ill served by the school.                     | Teacher works to ensure that all students receive a fair opportunity to succeed.  | Teacher makes a concerted effort to challenge negative attitudes or practices to ensure that all students, particularly those traditionally underserved, are honored in the school. |
| <b>Decision making</b>                                 | Teacher makes decisions and recommendations based on self-serving interests.                         | Teacher's decisions and recommendations are based on limited though genuinely professional considerations. | Teacher maintains an open mind and participates in team or departmental decision making.  | Teacher takes a leadership role in team or departmental decision making and helps ensure that such decisions are based on the highest professional standards.                       |
| <b>Compliance with school and district regulations</b> | Teacher does not comply with school and district regulations.  | Teacher complies minimally with school and district regulations, doing just enough to get by.              | Teacher complies fully with school and district regulations.  | Teacher complies fully with school and district regulations, taking a leadership role with colleagues.  |

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# HARBOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

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## HARBOR ESSENTIALS FOR EDUCATORS

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# Introduction

*The Harbor Educational Institute has outlined the “ESSENTIALS” of the Harbor Method™. The Essentials are those philosophies, practices and teaching resources that are expected to be practiced by and evident in schools using the Harbor Method.*

*Each section is organized with a brief description and four components: What We Believe, What Students Do, What Teachers Do and What Principals Do.*

*Although the intent of this document is to provide as much clarity as possible, it needs to be accompanied with sound professional judgment within your unique setting. This judgment emerges from an unwavering commitment to both the Harbor Philosophy and being centered on a commitment to doing school differently to benefit students, teachers, families, and their communities as a whole.*

*Those areas of school and classroom management, as well as curriculum that are not outlined in this document are intended to be decided by the individual school.*

*The Harbor Educational Institute is primarily a training organization to assist schools in the creation of a school that uses the Harbor Method. We expect each school to create its own excellence as it implements these Essentials. We expect that as a professional community, Harbor Schools will network, share and support the development of excellence in all of our schools.*

*The Harbor Educational Institute wishes to thank the teachers of Liberty Charter School in Nampa, Idaho and the principals of Harbor Schools who have provided their expertise and wisdom in the preparation of this document.*

## WHAT IS THE HARBOR SCHOOL METHOD?

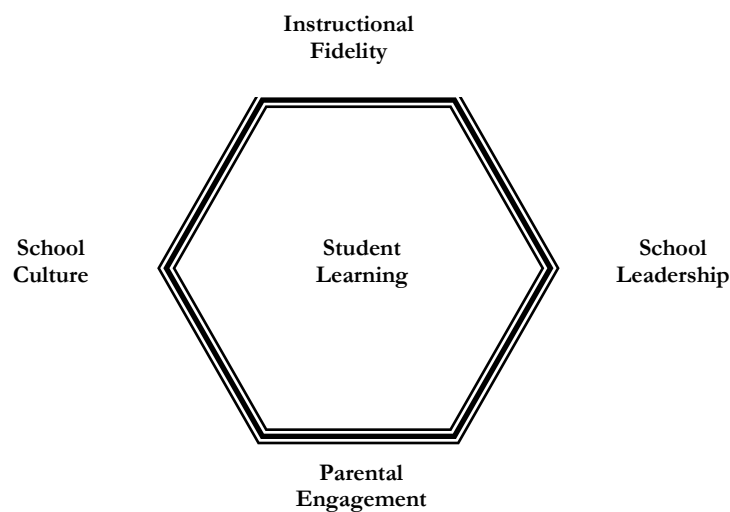
**T**he Harbor School Method is a way of teaching, a way of learning and a way of schooling. It is an integrated model designed to educate children to be capable graduates ready to contribute to a democratic society. Harbor Schools create a setting focused on the development of knowledge and skills, as well as the development of attitudes and dispositions of children. It is grounded in core beliefs about children, how they learn and the responsibilities of the adults who shape their development. The instructional strategies are not necessarily unique and innovative. What is unique and innovative is the manner in which these elements have been brought together to create a culture – a way of being as a school.

*The philosophy of a Harbor School is grounded in the belief that when there is low threat and content is highly challenging, accelerated learning takes place.*

*We believe that all children are capable of more than we imagine if we unlock their potential through high expectations, a rigorous, fast-paced curriculum, and dynamic character education.*

*Children must attain not only the knowledge and skills necessary for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but also the work habits, the communication and problem solving habits that contribute to a democratic society.*

The Harbor School Method integrates elements from the five key areas illustrated below.



## STUDENT LEARNING

Children learn in a social context of schools. They learn in and out of the classroom. They learn by what they see, what they hear and what they do. The Harbor School Method is built on the belief that all students should know that their teachers have high expectations for their academic accomplishments and for their conduct. Harbor educators intentionally design every aspect of school to provide clear and consistent expectations for students. This helps students know what is expected of them at school. The Harbor School Method is centered on student learning in and out of the classroom.

### *What We Believe*

- *Teach to the high. All children are capable of learning more than we think.*
- *Safety is fundamental to learn, develop and succeed.*
- *Make learning personal and important for students.*

Work habits are established early in life and the Harbor Method intentionally develops work habits in students that will serve them throughout their lives. Nurturing the development of students' intellectual, social, interpersonal and character growth is expected to be evident throughout the programs of a Harbor School. An environment in which high academic achievement is an expectation for all students is foundational. The goal of a Harbor School is to help all students develop their capacity for knowledge, skills and dispositions that equip them to be work and college ready.

### **What Students Do**

- ***Students are deeply engaged in their work.*** We define 'engagement' as the extent to which a student is *connected* to their work. How they do in school matters to them. The adults in the school continually help students develop a sense of personal accountability and responsibility for their performance.
- ***Students are able to articulate their understanding of expectations*** for their learning and their conduct in school.

- **Students demonstrate exemplary work habits.** Because students understand expectations early and expectations are consistent throughout the school, they are able to develop work habits that serve them.
- **Students communicate a sense of community and pride for their school** and their ability to succeed as a learner.
- **Students exceed state expectations for proficiency** as the minimum level of achievement.



## What Teachers Do

- **Student learning is at the center of all decisions** that a teacher makes. They continually reflect about their teaching and its effects on learning.
- **Teachers communicate high expectations** to all students. They use accelerated curriculum that go beyond state grade level standards. They expose students to concepts that are traditionally introduced in upper grades. This allows students to learn concepts earlier and more deeply through repetition and frequent exposure.
- **Teachers develop confident learners.** They tell students often, “If you do not get it the first time, you will get it the next time.” The methods of teaching essential concepts used result in *learning with roots*.
- **Teachers monitor student learning actively.** Every teacher can develop their own process for monitoring student learning. Feedback on student learning must first be helpful to the student so that they take responsibility for their own progress. Parents should know early and frequently how their children are doing.
- **Teachers problem-solve with the principal** and colleagues when students are not performing to expectations. Additional support or adjustments are made.
- **Teachers shape the dispositions and conduct** of their students. Teachers attend to the development of attitudes that affect how students engage in their work with deliberate action.
- **Teachers use student discipline as an opportunity to teach.** Teachers use natural consequences and utilize these moments to instruct students about choices and consequences. They publicly praise and recognize students for diligence, attitude and academic accomplishment.

## What Principals Do

- **Principals create a culture that is centered on student learning.** Harbor Schools center on learning, not testing. Assessing student learning is continuous in classrooms. Harbor educators understand and respect the role of national and state testing, but do not center their teaching on it, nor do they create an environment filled with anxiety.
- **Principals regularly and systematically monitor student learning.** A Harbor principal monitors both what is formally tested and what is demonstrated by students, in and out of the classroom. They are familiar with students' academic progress and needs.
- **Principals shape the development of students' dispositions.** They know students and they seek opportunities to reinforce the work habits and attitudes that contribute to their success. They publicly praise when students succeed in and out of the classroom.
- **Principals admonish** students when they have not met the behavioral expectations. Principals use these circumstances to teach students the choices and consequences of their decisions. It is important for students to understand that their choices and decisions are important enough to impact others.
- **Principals facilitate the development of a useful reporting process** of student learning progress to parents that is informative, consistent, frequent and proactive.

## SCHOOL CULTURE

School cultures teach. They teach through the expectations set for and by the people working in them, both children and adults. They teach through the visible and invisible ways that people work together. They teach through the ways in which people treat one another. Safe, supportive school cultures mitigate the potential effect that differences among students could have on their learning. Principals are accountable for the school culture and must intentionally create the conditions consistent with Harbor philosophy and practices.

Harbor schools intentionally create a culture that lives what it believes. School cultures teach children and adults directly and indirectly. Everything that occurs within a school culture shapes behavior of people. *We are intentional about shaping that behavior.*

### *What We Believe*

- *Kindness is fundamental to safety.*
- *Leaders create the culture of a school.*
- *Students learn to self-govern in order to contribute to and support a democratic society as adults.*
- *Competent and caring adults are the most powerful teachers.*

The practices and conduct of the adults in the school are expected to be a primary model for students as they learn the character traits and work habits that will be life-long assets to them.

Harbor Schools focus on safety by removing fear, threat and intimidation from the learning environment. A focus on kindness and a zero tolerance policy for teasing, taunting, bullying, and negative peer pressure creates a positive, supportive and constructive environment for children to learn and grow. Adult decisions are made based on what is in the best interest of the students and the development of their knowledge,

skills and dispositions. There is evidence of kindness between students and students, students and adults, and adults with adults. Adults demonstrate their respect and their responsibility to maintain a clean, orderly environment. They extend themselves to one another and to the students. Respect and personal responsibility is visible in all interactions.

## What Students Do

- **Students are respectful to adults and to one another.** They are taught the expectations of conduct. From the playground, to the bus, to the cafeteria, students learn expectations for their behavior. They are trained to be polite to all adults in the school. They learn to say 'please' and 'thank you' to the staff in the cafeteria. They use napkins and quiet voices to visit with their friends in the cafe. They open doors for adults. When students are kind to and polite to one another, teaching and learning is not interrupted with reprimands.
- **Students learn early that their conduct in school creates the foundation** for their conduct after they leave school. They are taught expectations, hear examples and observe the modeling from adults.
- **Students are expected to walk, without talking, in lines** from kindergarten through eighth grade. This is another example of proactive expectations minimizing opportunities for misconduct and distractions in hallways.
- **Students do not talk in bathrooms.** The rationale for silence in the bathrooms is that it proactively prevents misconduct that can develop there. We want students to get in and get out quickly and return to their class.
- **Students know that there is zero tolerance for bullying.** and communicate a sense of security that they are taken care of at school.
- **Students understand that their choices bring consequences.** Consequences occur naturally and always with an explicit lesson.
- **Students know they will be recognized for their successes,** not only in what they know and can do academically, but also in their effort and attitude.
- **Students respect their school environment and property** by keeping it clean, orderly and through community service learning projects.

## What Teachers Do

- **Teachers are proactive.** They try to prevent misconduct, inattentiveness, and disengagement from learning. Their motive is successful learning for all students in all settings at school.

- ***Harbor teachers:***
  - ***Teach clear expectations*** through the use of the *Student Training Tape*. It is most effective to show the tape in individual classrooms on the first day of school, before students leave their room for recess, lunch, or another class such as music or P.E. Teachers need to attentively watch the video with students and make comments like "I love this" or "We can look better than that tape-let's practice." Watching passively or working on some other task will compromise the importance and the learning. Teachers know that modeling is the most powerful method of instruction. Teachers realize that their reactions will be closely observed and imitated by students. If a teacher is enthusiastic and obviously supportive of the behaviors on the tape, students will buy in. However, if the teacher thinks it is too much to expect students to walk quietly in straight lines, they will not take it seriously. Teachers discuss with students the reasons why the behaviors are important.
  - ***Teach personal accountability.*** All teachers develop ways to teach students a value for personal accountability. Teachers look for 'teachable moments' that naturally occur throughout the day.
  - ***Walk behind students in lines.*** Teachers continually watch students to observe conduct consistent with expectations as well as actively supervise opportunities to prevent misconduct.
  - ***Remain alert*** and 'have their antennas up', anticipating instances or circumstances in which students might be challenged, tempted or vulnerable.
  - ***Teachers do not yell*** when discipline is called for. The Harbor Method is proactive. If teachers are proactive regarding student conduct, they will not be prone to sudden anger. Discipline is natural and provided without negative emotion, but with clear and direct attention. The adults are calm and respond in a matter of fact manner.
- ***Teachers send for the principal*** to come to the classroom in cases of defiance or recurring infractions. Students are not sent to the office. Students learn quickly that issues are addressed and that consequences are immediate. The adults at school hold students accountable for the expectations set.
- ***Teachers use humor*** to create a safe and comfortable learning environment and to send messages that are important to students.
- ***Teachers contribute to the positive, supportive culture*** of the school through their deeds, words, and practices. Gossiping, destructive communication, and hurtful exchanges are not acceptable.

## What Principals Do

- ***Principals actively work to create the school culture*** that exemplifies the Harbor philosophy: high expectations; kindness towards one another; safety physically and emotionally, respect and responsibility for the environment and every student. Positive and professional working relationships among the adults are essential and the principal actively fosters that.

- **Principals conduct an orientation for students** at the beginning of the year that outlines the expectations of the school. It is expected that the Student Training Video be used by each teacher in their classrooms to facilitate understanding and expectations close to home. The principal and staff however should preview the tape together before school starts to discuss how the teachers and all staff will be consistent on expectations.
- **Principals design school-wide schedules to minimize misconduct.** School lunches are scheduled by grade levels: grades 1-2; grades 3-4, etc. Class recess and playground time are scheduled with like ages to maximize safety and kindness.
- **Principals have the primary responsibility to supervise lunch, school arrival and school dismissal.** This is the principal's classroom in a Harbor School. This is the setting in which the principal gets to know the students in less formal contexts. Interactions are personalized, using these opportunities to acknowledge positive things about the students. School arrival and dismissal are opportunities to visit with parents. This is an ESSENTIAL responsibility of the principal to establish positive relationships with students and parents, be proactive and model the Harbor philosophy. If the principal has an emergency, they need to temporarily assign someone to that responsibility and orient them on consistent expectations.
- **Principals support teachers in the management of student behavior.** If misconduct of a student occurs, it is addressed in the environment in which it happened. If a student has defied a teacher, the principal takes care of it in the classroom so all students see that consequences happen to misbehaving students.
- **Principals are involved with student management.** Teachers inform the principals early and depend on them to intervene. For example, in the case of a student who is chronically misbehaving, they would check with the teacher first thing in the morning, saying, for example, "Mrs. Colbert, I just need to know how Johnny is doing?" This is done early enough where the student has not had time to do anything wrong yet. When the teacher indicates, "Mrs. Stallcop, he has been great!" the principal always follows up with a positive comment to the student.
- **Principals use time in hallways to acknowledge** the behaviors or accomplishments in more informal ways. It can be a time to connect with students in a more informal and discreet way. This also minimizes student misconduct.
- **Principals insure that all state regulations and board policies** regarding student discipline are followed.
- **Principals work with Boards to establish policies** that exemplify the work ethic that students see in adults and they themselves learn to develop. There is an expectation that the employees will be in attendance every day. Absence is an exception.
- **Principals remove students in extreme cases of misconduct.** Principal and teacher(s) decide together on an appropriate course of action. Federal regulations, state rules, school policy are followed. The safety of other students in a supportive learning environment is paramount.
- **Principals demonstrate a proactive approach to communication** to inform parents, teachers and students of key information for their success at school.

- **Principals continually monitor the use of Harbor ESSENTIALS** that contribute to the desired culture, including adult modeling, Rules and Reasons, 40 Cards, and Citizen of the Week.
- **Principals insure a safe and clean environment in and out of school.** Keeping a classroom and the school clean, orderly and maintained teaches respect and responsibility. Bathrooms are decorated as they might be in one's home. Students have a role in lunch room activities, such as serving and cleaning.
- **Principals insure that the Pledge of Allegiance is recited every day.** How and when it is said is the discretion of each school.
- **Principals demonstrate a non-threatening mindset and approach.** They demonstrate and model this to teachers. Discipline is an opportunity to lay out consequences and to learn.
- **Principals use humor** to create a relaxed atmosphere in which both the adults and students enjoy teaching and learning.



## INSTRUCTIONAL FIDELITY

**T**he quality of learning for students has everything to do with the quality of teaching. One can find examples of exceptional teaching in many schools. **Three key elements distinguish a Harbor school from other schools.**

### *What We Believe*

- *High expectations with high quality instruction everywhere, everyday, by everyone.*
- *Students benefit from consistency, coherence and creativity of the adults.*
- *The foundation for critical thinking habits is challenging content, proficiency in skill and determination of best effort.*

**One** - faculty and staff who decide to work in a Harbor School commit to adopting the beliefs that ground the schools' philosophy. Their teaching, leading and working habits emerge from those beliefs.

**Two** - faculty and staff are prepared to meet clear expectations through the use of specific curriculum, teaching strategies and student management practices that support the intellectual as well as the social, emotional and character development of children.

**Three** - they understand the importance of instructional fidelity. Instructional fidelity is defined as being consistent with the Harbor philosophy and practices to achieve program coherence throughout their school. Program coherence matters for students.

The consistency of structure, expectations and instruction accelerates learning. This is a key component for school wide high performance.

Program and instructional coherence is a signature feature of Harbor Schools. This feature brings benefits to student learning because they know what to expect from grade to grade, class to class, adult to adult. Students learn that they have multiple opportunities to learn information and to demonstrate their understanding and skill. Students learn the instructional routines in early grades which accelerate their ability to focus on new information, skill development and thinking skills. The core instructional methodology is consistent across teachers yet implemented with the unique creativity and talents of each teacher. Pacing of accelerated objectives is coordinated between grade levels.

## What Students Do

- **Students learn to persevere** towards mastery of their learning. They are not afraid to try and understand mistakes are for learning.
- **Students articulate what they are learning.** They know what they are expected to learn which contributes to their active engagement and success.
- **Students demonstrate internal motivation to learn and excel.** The adults create the school and class environment that fosters internal motivation and satisfaction.



## What Teachers Do

- **Teachers teach to the high.** Challenging students and expecting high levels of learning is visible in classrooms. Teachers create additional opportunities for the range of student learning needs.
- **Teachers adhere to the concept boards,** as disseminated, especially in their first year. As they acquire more comfort and familiarity with the methods, they adjust to meet the curriculum and learning needs of their students while maintaining the fidelity to the Concept Board approach.
- **Teachers use direct instruction.** Direct instruction is used during concept boards. Other instructional methods are used as teachers match the specific learning objectives to the best instructional approach.
- **Teachers design and engineer** the learning environment. They skillfully select the essential and accelerated curriculum objectives and coordinate them for alignment between and across grade levels. Teaching is the priority of every teacher. All activities of the day are opportunities for teachers to be intentional about what students can learn.
- **Teachers exercise individual creativity and talent.** Instructional fidelity and individual teacher creativity coexist. Teachers appreciate the consistency and utilize their talents and creativity on instruction strategies that are varied according to the learning objectives. They know where they need to be consistent in order to accelerate their learning.
- **Teachers instill values in students** for the character and work habits that are required to be successful and a contributing member of a democratic society.
- **Teachers are adaptive to the needs of students.** They see mistakes as a teaching opportunity and teach students to see mistakes as a learning opportunity. They are transparent about their own mistakes, modeling the learning opportunity.
- **Teachers manage student conduct consistently.** Classroom teachers select a student to carry the clip board that holds a “sign-off sheet” for special subject area teachers. The special subject area teacher uses this sheet to communicate the

behavior of the class and/or specific students. Positive reports may earn students an extra Hall of Fame.

- **Teachers are problem solvers.** They monitor student learning and create ways to meet needs of students. They direct the role of the Educational Assistant and utilize resources to support student learning. They take leadership roles and creatively approach dilemmas with the principal and their colleagues.
- **Teachers encourage the quiet students.** They set all students up for success. They are intentional about engaging specific students and are expert in how and when.
- **Teachers prepare students for state wide testing.** Teachers want students to feel prepared. They do not overemphasize its importance or create anxiety about it. Rather, they help students to be familiar with the mechanics of the testing process and confident in their preparedness to do well.
- **Teachers use national and state assessments as one indicator** of the quality of teaching and learning. They also use Concept Board Assessments and student work to guide their daily interactions with students. They use assessments as sources of insight about student learning, instructional effectiveness and curricular needs.

## What Principals Do

- **Principals know the Harbor curriculum, instructional practices and resources thoroughly.** They are able to expertly represent the Harbor Method to the community. They demonstrate effective teaching to new teachers.
- **Principals monitor the teaching and learning** on a daily basis. This is their most important responsibility. They are highly visible in classrooms, on the playground, in the cafeteria, and during arrival and dismissal. They provide continual feedback to teachers regarding what was effective and what they might consider. They encourage students and recognize the behaviors and achievement that they want to reinforce.
- **Principals monitor student and school performance.** They review data from state and school assessments. They monitor enrollment, attendance and proactively approach performance improvements.
- **Principals defend, protect and insure instructional fidelity** and program coherence. They understand that traditional education has often been fragmented for students. They understand the influence of programmatic coherence and consistency on student learning.
- **Principals cover classes, provide assistance and support to a teacher.** Above all, principals believe that teaching is an honored profession and quality of instruction is the value that schools bring to students. They quickly cover instruction for teachers when appropriate.
- **Principals monitor grade to grade articulation and across grade consistency.** The curriculum is built for grade level mastery and acceleration. Teachers need to annually calibrate the content and grade level expectations to insure program instructional consistency and alignment to student learning expectations.

## SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

**T**he quality of a school, the quality of teaching and the confidence of parents rest on the competence of the school's leaders. Leadership comes from two functions of a Harbor School. One is the Board of Directors which is responsible for the governance, policies and strategic direction of the school, as well as the link to the parent community. The other is the school principal, who carries out the expectations of the Board and insures the quality of the school programs.

The ability of a Harbor School to carry out its mission depends heavily upon the strength of its governing board. An effective board provides strategic direction for the school, chooses

### *What We Believe*

- *Principals and school boards are accountable for the quality and performance of the school..*
- *Leaders create the conditions for adults and students to be successful..*
- *Leaders are explicit in their expectations of adults and hold them accountable to those expectations.*
- *The principal is responsible for the culture of the school.*

and nurtures strong school leaders, and ensures the school's financial and legal soundness. For a charter school to succeed, it must form a board that is committed to the school's mission, possess substantial leadership skills and expertise, set policy that guides the school's work, and evaluate both the school and itself with an eye toward continuous improvement.

Leadership has a profound effect on the conduct and achievement of students and the adults who contribute to their learning in the school setting. We believe that the principal has a direct accountability for the environment in which teachers teach and students learn.

The principal's primary responsibility in a Harbor School is to support teachers and protect teaching time. This is not merely a function of scheduling or other administrative activities, but of the principal's presence throughout all student contact areas during school hours. Principals in Harbor Schools are extremely visible to the student population in the classroom, in the hallways, in the lunchroom, and on the playground. They use all of these venues to teach practical aspects of living and how to interact positively with one's neighbors and community. The principal's presence in this manner provides daily supervision and support of teachers to ensure instructional fidelity.

## What Students Do

- **Students demonstrate respect for authority.** They understand there are rules, there are choices and there are natural consequences.
- **Students know the principal.** Not only do they know the principal, they know that he or she is looking out for their best interests and what they expect.

## What Teachers Do

- **Teachers are leaders of instruction.** They are hired as experts of teaching and learning. They sustain their professional commitment to deliver high quality instruction for extraordinary results in student learning.
- **Teachers come with solutions** to presenting problems. They are creative in approaching any dilemma they face and present options that the principal and school might consider to respond, adapt or change any component that is interfering with their ability to teach effectively.
- **Teachers depend upon their principal to guard their instructional time.** Teachers know what they are expected to do and they know what principals are expected to do. Roles are clear and the differences in authorities are respected.



## What Principals Do

- **Principals act as stewards of the educational process.** They understand their responsibility as custodian of parent trust. They work to ensure that parents have confidence in their school to create the kind of school that will make their child successful.
- **Principals create the culture and conditions** for high expectations for learning, conduct and program coherence across grades. They create the conditions for teachers to excel at teaching. They develop the capabilities of staff for instructional effectiveness and high student achievement.
- **Principals are present, visible and actively monitor the learning environments.** Since principals supervise lunch time, arrival and dismissal, they are visible and use this time to chat with parents and to interact with students. Paper work and other management responsibilities are performed before and after the instructional day.
- **Principals establish trust and confidence** with the Board of Directors. They implement the strategic direction and policies established by the Board.

- **Principals communicate their expectations to employees** in modeling the Harbor philosophy and practices. They communicate a sense of mutual responsibility for all adults to contribute to the kind of culture that supports their own effectiveness and the success of their students.
- **Principals act on those adult expectations.** They address issues and inconsistencies directly with staff. The adult as a model to students is highly regarded.
- **Principals promote positive working relationships.** They immediately address behaviors or practices that are threats to the Harbor culture. An example is gossiping among adults. The adults in a Harbor School are expected to provide constructive examples of high character and personal accountability for students. A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself how you would feel if the person you were discussing suddenly happened upon your conversation. Would you be embarrassed?
- **Principals establish proactive, transparent communication** with the Board, the staff and the parents. The principal anticipates questions and makes communication a management priority.
- **Principals create opportunities** for continuous professional development of staff. Principals model continuous learning and create opportunities for their staff to develop and contribute to professional learning.
- **Principals are self-directed learners.** As instructional leaders, they must remain knowledgeable and current in educational research. They create opportunities for teachers to develop professional skills, while guarding and protecting faculty from irrelevant distractions from their instruction.
- **Principals create a calm professional setting.** They do not create anxiety around testing, requirements and areas to improve. They create an adaptive, flexible, can do environment.

## What School Boards Do

Public charter schools are formed under the non-profit laws of the state. Like most non-profit organizations, public charter schools are mission-driven. Public charter school



boards in Idaho follow nationally recognized models for governance, which require boards to serve the mission of the school.

Public charter schools, like all effective non-profit organizations, carry out their mission by selecting board members that share common goals and utilize the talents of various volunteer members of

the community to enhance the school's operation. It would be irresponsible for public charter school founders not to protect the mission and stability of that school by ensuring that board members understand and support the central concepts upon which the school was founded.

One challenge that faces charter school boards is fulfilling the founder's mission of the school. Recruiting board members who are committed to the school and who possess the skills, knowledge and interests are foundational to develop their non-profit organization to succeed for students, families and teachers.

#### **School Boards:**

- **Identify and recruit board members** who are committed to the vision and mission of the founders. They need to possess the skills, knowledge and attitudes that are needed to effectively carry out its responsibilities. Board members need to help recruits determine if their needs, interests, values, and beliefs are aligned with that of the schools' mission.
- **Orient and train board members** to be effective leaders and decision-makers. They must be well-informed about all four areas: corporate law, internal policies, and procedures/contracts with third parties; local, state, and federal laws/regulations; the charter school's financial resources, facilities, and equipment; and risk management. Training for service on the board must include a thorough understanding of the Harbor Method, the challenges and requirements of board service, and their legal responsibilities.
- **Make effective decisions** consistent with the mission of the charter school. As the board of an independent public school and a separately incorporated non-profit organization, the charter school board must act as a guardian of public trust with legal governing obligations.
- **Plan for near-term and long-term success.** Strategic planning and thinking is paramount to the success of a school. The need to determine how the board can organize itself in order to function as an effective, future-focused leadership team is a critical role of charter school boards.
- **Carry out legal and financial responsibilities.** Board members know how to monitor the organization's financial position, and understand their roles versus committee roles in the oversight responsibilities.
- **Develop effective board-staff relations** and maintain an effective, mutually supportive working relationship with the charter school administrators.
- **Develop fruitful board/community/parent relations** by forging strong relationships with parents and community members. The charter school board can play a critical role in developing partnerships and collaborations that tap the resources of the community, enhancing the school's capacity to meet the educational needs of its children.
- **Develop internal accountability** of the performance of the school and the people who work there. Boards know that quality is developed and maintained with competent professionals who implement the school's mission.
- **Create and maintain effective committee structures** to enhance the board's overall effectiveness by matching the needs and requirements of the committee with the skills, knowledge and interests of prospective committee members.
- **Foster fund-raising** with a standing committee whose purpose is to plan, organize, and build successful fund-raising campaigns.
- **Develop effective board self-assessment** on the effectiveness of the board in carrying out its roles and responsibilities. It is important that the board spends time

looking at its own performance in order to improve it. Charter school boards need to institute a self-assessment process to continuously help the board enhance its effectiveness.

## PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Harbor Schools depend on the support and engagement of parents. Most of our schools began with a small group of interested, committed and dedicated parents who wanted a Harbor education for their children. Harbor educators must always remember that and cultivate strong parental engagement. The school actively works to earn their trust and confidence to provide a safe and productive learning environment for their children.

### *What We Believe*

- *Educators regard and engage parents as their children's first teachers.*
- *Parents contribute to the excellence of a school.*

It is essential that parents are well informed on the elements of the Harbor School Method. **All Harbor parents understand that they are their child's first teacher. They can identify their role in "What Teachers Do" sections of this document.** All parents should have sufficient understanding of the method upon enrolling their children, a thorough orientation before the first day of school, and ongoing opportunities to experience the method through classroom visits. Their understanding of Harbor practices is essential for them to support their child's

education. Harbor Schools encourage parents to volunteer in various ways to enhance the program's effectiveness.

### What Students Do



- *Students contribute to their families* by modeling at home and in the community the same kind of behaviors and work ethic expected at school.
- *Students contribute to their families* through community service learning projects.

## What Teachers Do

- **Teachers utilize parent volunteers** to support student learning. Teachers direct parents who are available to volunteer their skills and talents in their child's classroom.
- **Teachers communicate proactively** with parents, as a group and for individual students.

## What Principals Do

- **Principals proactively communicate to parents.** Communication is frequent. Principals explain how their school does business. Communications include the following:
  - **Interruptions to the instructional day are kept to a minimum.** Emergencies are an exception. All other communication is done before or after school. Principals and teachers 'teach' parents that instructional time is the highest value.
  - **Teachers and principal want students to develop a productive work ethic early in their lives.** We encourage parents to support their children in their work and to encourage superior efforts to their work.
  - **Before school starts, invitations are extended to parents to meet with teachers at all grade levels** in the initial year of their child's attendance and then at kindergarten and first grade every year. First days of school and last days of school are instructionally full days.
  - **Principals prepare weekly notes** for parents that require their signature and return to their child's teacher. The notes report their child's attendance and other essentials that parents need to know.
  - **Principals communicate the importance of the school's expectation of student attendance** to parents. Parents need to plan family trips and vacations around the school calendar. This communicates a sense of high value and respect for their time at school.
- **Principals create opportunities for parents** to understand the educational program and the Harbor method that their school is using.
- **Principals establish productive relationships** with parents. Because they are well informed regarding the progress and the conduct of students, they are able to talk with parents regarding concerns.

## THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM ESSENTIALS

The Harbor Method™ is an instructional approach that provides students with a coherent system of learning from grade to grade. It is a synthesis of multiple instructional approaches that are well-documented for their effects on learning. Over the past several years, research on learning has established key attributes for effective teaching and effective learning. The Harbor Method incorporates these key elements into its pedagogy. Instruction of concepts and skills is *frequent* and *integrated* into multiple contexts. Concepts and skills are not taught in isolation, but incorporated throughout the day. Teachers *motivate* students through instructional design and through behavior expectation training. Students develop a learning-ready posture through intentional instruction on attention. The Harbor Method does not separate the development of character in children from the development of their academic skills.



Harbor Schools utilize the Harbor Curriculum for reading, language arts, and math which includes the Idaho State Standards as a foundation. It extends student learning through designation of objectives as either “essential,” which are expected to be mastered at that grade level or “accelerated,” which are expected to be introduced or repeated at that grade level. Teachers design instruction based on the level of cognitive demand that they are helping students achieve.

Direct instruction is used to teach students information, facts and fundamental skills. The effects of direct instruction have been consistently documented. The Harbor Method focuses on building knowledge for students to develop their capability to apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate. The Harbor Method incorporates both information and skill development as requirements for tasks of high cognitive demand. Teachers skillfully scaffold student learning, building on their success from year to year and increasing the cognitive demand. Instruction is fast-paced to develop not only the targeted knowledge or skill but the ability to focus and attend. They learn skills that need to be automatic. Instruction emphasizes opportunities for students to develop thinking skills that:

- acquire and integrate knowledge
- extend and refine knowledge
- use knowledge meaningfully

As students progress through grades, teachers design learning to incorporate these areas and develop the ability of each of the students to be a critical thinker and a self-directed learner.

## MATH INSTRUCTION

The hallmark instructional strategy of the Harbor Method is the *Concept Board*. It is used to teach both the essential and accelerated objectives of the Harbor Curriculum in a repetitive manner. Teachers use their white boards to display the daily concepts, implement it through direct instruction, and then scaffold to build on the skills which are repeated everyday. Students respond by engaging in oral recitation and joining in choral response. This provides a safe environment in which students can learn and teachers can monitor each child's progress. By modeling and reinforcing as a group, the students do not feel singled out, but rather know that if they do not get it today, they will get it tomorrow.

Teachers are provided CDs illustrating *Concept Boards* that should be used as outlined during the first year of the program. These “boards” have been created by skilled master teachers at every grade level and are artfully constructed to contain both the essential and accelerated curricular expectations for that grade level.

As teachers become more comfortable with the Harbor School Method™, they may alter the *content* in subsequent years, to meet students' needs and curricular expectations. The *Method*, however, does not change. Previous new teachers of Harbor Schools have said “trust the Method”! It works!

Examples of Concept Boards:

# GRADE FIVE

Week of \_\_\_\_\_  
WEEK 15 DAY 1

**Numerals and Operations**  
Write in standard form:  
eighteen million, seven hundred twelve thousand, ninety-nine  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

MMMCDXXMXCIV

\_\_\_\_\_

Figure the difference:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Round each to the greatest value:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Decimals

| Fraction      | Decimal | Percent |
|---------------|---------|---------|
|               | 1.5     |         |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ |         |         |
|               |         | 9%      |

**Geometry**  
Plot the ordered pairs and connect the points to construct each quadrilateral. Then write rectangle, square, parallelogram, trapezoid, or rhombus to identify each quadrilateral.

4  
3  
2  
1  
0

0 1 2 3 4

(0,0) (2,4) (3,1) (4,3)

4  
3  
2  
1  
0

0 1 2 3 4

(2,0) (3,0) (3,4) (2,4)

**Fractions**

$127\frac{5}{5}$   
 $136\frac{1}{6}$   
 $+ 159\frac{5}{6}$

$315\frac{7}{15}$   
 $- 177\frac{6}{7}$

Convert:  $8\frac{1}{12} = \frac{73}{11}$   
 $4\frac{20}{21} = \frac{56}{7}$

**Estimate**  
We paid for 100 sundaes.  
Grade 1 = 25 students  
Grade 2 = 28 students  
Grade 3 = 29 students  
Are there enough sundaes?  
Estimated number of students. \_\_\_\_\_

**Vocabulary**  
(Keep test vocab. on A-Z's)

**Divisibility**

|       | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 10 |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1,004 |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |

**Measurement**  
Complete <, >, =  
fortnight \_\_\_\_\_ 4 weeks  
escape velocity \_\_\_\_\_ 24,800 mph  
3 yards \_\_\_\_\_ 14 feet  
1,000 pennies \_\_\_\_\_ 10 dollars  
# sides octagon \_\_\_\_\_ # sides hexagon

**Fractions**  
12 = 44 =  
5 = 22 =  
6 = GCF =  
LCM = \*  $\frac{5}{7} =$  %

**Solve**

1.) On which day were no phone calls made?  
2.) What was the total number of phone calls for the week?  
3.) On which day did the Spinos make 6 calls?  
4.) On which two days did they make 10 calls altogether?

Radius = 5"  
Diameter = \_\_\_\_\_  
C ≈ \_\_\_\_\_

**CONCEPT BOARDS**

*Concept Boards* include:

- Real life concepts that are integrated, not isolated or segmented.
- Multiple opportunities to learn concepts every day.
- Opportunities for students to shift thinking, as they move from one problem to the next. This is more reflective of real life rather than isolated attention to one type of content.
- Fast-paced teaching with “thinking aloud” opportunities for students to check for comprehension.
- Daily Oral Language (DOL).
- Daily Oral Analogies (DOA).
- Daily Oral Vocabulary (DOV).
- Schools follow Idaho State Standards and the recommended resources for
  - Daily Oral Geography (DOG).
  - Daily Oral Social Studies (DOSS). - <http://www.sde.state.id.us/instruct/socialstudies>
  - Daily Oral Science (DOS). - <http://www.sde.state.id.us/instruct/Science/>
- A framework from which teachers can design homework, reviews and assessments.

*Concept Boards* and the accelerated curriculum are essential requirements of a Harbor School. The *Concept Boards*, taught through direct instruction, are an essential method for teaching math. Teachers use the “think aloud” method. They model for students (“my turn”), then students say it with teachers (“your turn”), taking turns reciting the math concepts, functions and process. Teachers use repetition and check for student learning throughout the

instruction, for example, “Back row only”, “boys only”, “girls only,” etc. This teaching strategy actively involves all students, increases time on task, and allows teachers to correct quickly.

Mad minutes are done daily in grades 1-8. All teachers do at least one mad minute. Grades 3-6 assess students’ skills in timed tests. Math manipulatives are also used to deepen students’ understanding. Teachers often incorporate these manipulatives in other instructional activities where it fits. Grade levels utilize Problem Solvers to strengthen the problem-solving component of Math. This series incorporates various strategies such as Guess & Check, Draw a Picture, Use Logical Thinking, Work Backwards, etc. to reinforce/practice solving mathematical situations. This connects to the *Concept Board* as well as real-life situations, which is important to Harbor philosophy.

Schools may select supplemental math programs at their discretion.

## READING INSTRUCTION

The Harbor Method™ has not adopted one particular reading program. Each school is free to select its own reading program. The methods of direct instruction, which ensures quick pacing, repeated and spiraling concepts, and realistic application are used. There are ESSENTIAL elements in literacy instruction that have proven to be highly effective for student learning and can complement any reading program.

### Essential School-wide Reading Instructional Practices

- **Reading program is balanced and novel/literature based.** Each grade level has selected novels from a variety of genre such as historical fiction, science fiction, and biography. Units are prepared for each novel, gathering ideas from a variety of sources and integrating subjects from social studies , science, or math when possible. These units cover the State Standard's critical attributes required for each grade level. High-quality novels are used to practice/reinforce comprehension. Teachers instill a value that good books can be read over and over again.
- **Teachers do phonograms every day.** Daily review of phonograms through seventh grade in reading and spelling provides repeated practice of the 60+ units of sounds, fundamental to reading fluency. Teachers determine the amount of time spent. Some teachers utilize transitions to do this. Teachers create ways to adjust to age and to levels of student learning.
- **Reading aloud is fundamental to literacy development.** Students utilize buddy reading for 15-20 minutes daily in kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grades (3-4 times per



week in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 2-3 times per week in 8<sup>th</sup> grade), and gain confidence in their reading skills. Teachers often pair students with differing reading skills who can support one another and develop their ability to read with expression. Teachers move around the room, listening to students and documenting their observations for later instruction. Fluency practices include repeated readings of short stories and word lists, along with partner buddy reading. Oral reading gives an important check for accuracy. An assessment of words per minute is recorded daily and/or bimonthly.

- **Students do repeated readings for fluency.** This is particularly helpful for students requiring additional practice. Parent volunteers and educational assistants are often used to help students practice. The students have extensive reading practice in both narrative and expository texts.
- **Students use trackers (markers) to follow what the teacher reads aloud.** The tracking aids in student focus and reading expressively for enjoyment is modeled. Student and teacher engagement with words, passages, and ideas keeps interest intact. Subject integration with novels adds interest and relationship to concepts from other areas. Although it is possible for a student to pretend to track, tracking allows a teacher to easily spot who is on task and who is not. It helps all students pay attention. It also supports quick stops for questions and discussion allowing students to resume efficiently.
- **Students work on units designed at their level of mastery.** This provides students with an opportunity to interact with the text in a variety of ways.
- **Reading and language development are venues for character development.** The Book of Virtues by William J. Bennett is used. For example, fifth graders memorize "Can't" by Edgar Guest, and sixth graders memorize "If" by Rudyard Kipling. This is more than a mere memorization. The repetition, along with the mediation of the teacher, helps students understand what the key concepts in these pieces of poetry, such as courage, means. Once understanding takes place, there is a much greater likelihood that we will see examples of these character traits that will serve them well throughout their lives. With each grade level memorizing a poem from a section of The Book of Virtues, students will leave a Harbor School having studied each character area from perseverance to loyalty.
- **Comprehension instruction is emphasized in all grades.** McCall Crabbs resources are used for comprehension.
- **Thorough and on-going assessments are used** to determine individual needs. Classrooms have sufficient instructional support, early reading assistance, and interventions addressing a range of learning needs. Teachers engage parents to facilitate a home/school connection that benefits students.
- **Motivational incentives are used to encourage reading improvement.** Accelerated Reading Program may be used as a supplemental program coordinated through the school library.

It is a Harbor ESSENTIAL that educators be well-versed in research findings of reading. Scientifically based reading research has identified five essential components of effective reading instruction. To ensure that children learn to read well, explicit and systematic instruction must be provided in these five areas:

- **Phonemic awareness**—the ability to hear, identify, and play with individual sounds—or phonemes—in spoken words.
- **Phonics**—the relationship between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language.
- **Fluency**—the capacity to read text accurately and quickly, including oral reading skills.
- **Vocabulary**—the words students must know to communicate effectively.
- **Comprehension**—the ability to understand and gain meaning from what has been read.

### **What are the benefits of teaching phonemic awareness?**

Phonemic awareness instruction is most suitable for beginning readers in kindergarten or first grade. However, older students can also benefit from this type of instruction if they are exhibiting problems in applying phonics skills and strategies. Phonemic awareness helps to improve children's word recognition, decoding, and fluency. It also helps in developing phonics skills that may improve spelling because students learn to connect letters to sounds. Phonics can be especially beneficial for students with disabilities, English language learners, and many other struggling readers.

### **What are the benefits of teaching phonics?**

Research shows that children who are taught phonics are more proficient at reading and writing than those who are not taught phonics. They learn to spell more quickly because they concentrate on the relationship between sounds and letters—when they hear a word spoken, they are more likely to translate these sounds into letters than children who not taught phonics. They also learn word recognition more quickly because they learn keys for decoding new words. Developing skills in decoding new words accelerates reading abilities and leads to greater comprehension of texts.

### **What is fluency?**

Fluency is the ability to read a text quickly and accurately, instead of stumbling word by word. When readers don't have to slow down to decode every word, they're able to concentrate more on understanding the content. Fluency is characterized by the ability to read with expression as the reader begins to recognize not just single words but grammatical units such as phrases, clauses, and punctuation that give the text its tone and cadence.

Naturally, fluency varies depending on the reader's familiarity with the words in the text. Even a proficient reader may encounter texts, such as highly technical documents, with which he or she lacks fluency. Still, students should be fluent at reading any texts appropriate to their grade levels.

## **How can fluency be taught?**

Teaching fluency begins with the teacher modeling fluent reading. Teachers and other adults should read texts aloud to children so that the children can hear how their voices change with the text. Components of fluency include:

- Expression—the mood of the text, such as sadness or happiness.
- Intonation—the rise and fall of the voice, usually indicated by sentence structure or punctuation.
- Flow—the smoothness of the voice as it quickly moves through the words of a sentence.

After the text has been modeled, students should reread the text aloud, with the teacher providing guidance or feedback on the students' performance. In fact, research shows that repeated oral reading is a highly effective means of teaching fluency. Repeated oral reading means the students read aloud the same text several times, receiving feedback each time, until they are fluent with the text.

Repeated oral reading does not have to mean one child reading independently to the teacher. Repeated oral reading can take several forms, and teachers should employ a variety of strategies for fluency practice. Children can read together from books as a chorus, or the teacher can provide a text in large print and point out the words as everyone says them together. Students can also be paired with the more-fluent students who provide modeling and feedback. Regardless of the method used for repeated oral reading, the key points are modeling, feedback, and repetition.

In modeling fluency or providing feedback to students, teachers should be direct about when the voice changes. For example, they can point out clues in the text, such as words that suggest mood, or they can point out punctuation, such as exclamation marks, that suggest a voice rising with excitement. While different children might read with variations in expression, there are still clues in texts for how they should be read, and teachers should explicitly point these out.

## **To develop fluency, what should children read?**

Success breeds success, so children should read texts that are appropriate to their reading levels. This method allows them to experience success and build fluency. Using short texts—200 or fewer words—helps develop fluency. Furthermore, teachers should use different kinds of texts; poetry is often a good choice because of the rhythm and rhyme employed.

## **Does silent, independent reading build fluency?**

The research on silent, independent reading as a strategy to increase fluency is inconclusive. However, given daily time pressures, silent, independent reading is probably more appropriate to an individual student's spare time during the day or after school. During class

time, students are better served when teachers can provide explicit, systematic fluency instruction.

### **How can teachers measure fluency?**

Teachers observing oral reading, using their experience, can make judgments about a student's fluency, but more formal methods should be used as well. Students can be evaluated based on reading speed, degree of expression, and level of comprehension.

One common method for measuring fluency is to time students as they read samples aloud. The teacher counts the number of errors made and compares that to the number of words read. This ratio can then be compared to published norms, and can also be used to monitor individual growth by comparing it against the students' previous words per minute.

### **Why is vocabulary important?**

Vocabulary is important because students use their personal vocabularies to help them understand the words they see in a text. In most cases, students sound out the letters they see in a written word and then compare those sounds to their personal vocabularies to find a match. Of course, the larger the student's personal vocabulary, the more matches he or she finds in print and the greater the word recognition.

There are four types of vocabulary:

- Listening vocabulary—the words needed to understand what is heard
- Speaking vocabulary—the words used when speaking
- Reading vocabulary—the words needed to understand what is read
- Writing vocabulary—the words used in writing

### **How do students expand their vocabularies?**

Children learn most of their vocabularies from everyday conversation, adults reading to them, and reading to themselves. On the other hand, in the classroom, students best learn vocabulary through explicit and systematic instruction from their teachers. Teachers can supply strategies that help children learn vocabulary that they would not otherwise learn outside the classroom.

### **How should teachers teach vocabulary?**

There are two primary ways to teach vocabulary. The first way is to directly instruct children in the meanings of specific words. For example, before starting a lesson, teachers can familiarize students with keywords they will encounter in their reading material. The instruction should include using the words often and in several contexts.

The second way to teach vocabulary is to provide strategies for learning new words as they are encountered in texts. Such strategies include:

- Use of secondary materials, such as dictionaries
- Using word parts, such as prefixes, suffixes, and root words
- Using context clues
- Use of dramatics / acting out definitions of words

In both cases, vocabulary instruction should be explicit and systematic.

### **Which words should teachers teach directly?**

Because there are too many words in a text to teach all of them directly, teachers need to choose wisely which words they will teach. Here is some advice on which words to teach:

- Important words—words that are critical to understanding a text
- Useful words—words that students will see often
- Difficult words—words that have multiple meanings or are easily confused with other words

### **What is comprehension?**

Comprehension is the goal of reading instruction. It is the ability to create meaning from text. However, not everyone is aware that comprehension can be taught. By using certain proven comprehension strategies, teachers can improve students' abilities to understand what they read.

### **What comprehension strategies are most effective?**

Research has revealed several effective comprehension strategies:

- Teaching children to pinpoint hard-to-understand sections of text and then seeking solutions such as rereading, restating, and looking forward to other sections for clues.
- Using graphic organizers—such as maps, charts, and diagrams help students focus on important points the author is trying to convey. They help students organize information to increase learning and retention.
- Answering questions—among several benefits, answering teachers' questions helps students focus on important points in a text and read actively.
- Generating questions—students who are taught to ask their own questions become more active, involved readers.
- Recognizing story structure—students who can analyze a text in terms of its plot, characters, and other content categories are more likely to remember the story. They must also recognize text features in both fiction and nonfiction texts.
- Summarizing—encourages students to focus on the most important elements in a text and then reprocess them through using their own words.

## How can comprehension strategies be taught?

Based on the findings of recent research, the best means of teaching comprehension strategies are explicit and systematic and include:

- **Direct explanation by the teacher**—the teacher describes comprehension strategies such as the ones listed in the preceding section.
- **Modeling by the teacher**—the teacher applies a comprehension strategy to a sample text. For example, the teacher might generate questions regarding the content of a book all the children have read. The questions would relate to characters and events within the book. The teacher verbalizes the thought process he or she is using to gather meaning from the text.
- **Guided practice by the teacher**—the teacher steps through the application of a selected strategy with the help of students. For example, the teacher could help students generate questions about the characters and events in a book they all have read.
- **Application by the student with help from the teacher**—the teacher directs the students to apply a selected strategy, and the teacher moves among the students, supplying feedback appropriate to the strategy. For example, the teacher could ask students to read the first chapter of a chapter book and write down any questions they have about the characters or events. Working individually with the students, the teacher confirms that the children have asked questions that stem directly from the content.

These are the major strategies that can help children develop their comprehension skills and grow as readers.

Complementary strategies include:

- **Cooperative learning**—working in small groups allows students to help each other and learn and apply comprehension strategies.
- **Using comprehension strategies flexibly and in combination**—in this type of instruction, teachers work with students to apply multiple comprehension strategies in response to different types of comprehension problems. The specific strategies used are:
  - Asking questions
  - Summarizing
  - Clarifying words or sentences they don't understand
  - Predicting what might come next in the text

## VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

- **Vocabulary development is a key component of a Harbor School.** Students learn words through ‘whole body learning’- a total immersion of multi-sensory strategies: oral recitation, dramatizations, choral speaking. Not all students may master these words, but the repetition will insure that they will recognize them and be familiar with their meaning.
- **Vocabulary development is embedded daily.** Vocabulary sources include the literature used at each grade level and the book, *110 Words to Pass the SAT and ACT* for grades 3-8 and above. For Kindergarten through grade 2, words can be taken from Dolch lists, ISAT vocabulary list and literature.
- **Teachers integrate the development of vocabulary** in content areas for their students. They recognize that students may have different life experiences, so they often bring in specific vocabulary words to build on or extend those life experiences that relate to the content and context of their instruction.
- **Teachers communicate the vocabulary selections to the next grade level.** Student portfolios might include a running record of vocabulary words to which students have been exposed. Subsequent grades can then repeat and extend. Vocabulary words can be reinforced through computer lab and other special area subjects as appropriate.
- **The ISAT has designated key words that are used in the tests.** These words are imbedded into daily teaching and are not recommended to be used for vocabulary skits. The goal of vocabulary development is to enrich and extend.

## LANGUAGE ARTS



There are essential features of the Harbor School Method™ that contribute to the development of competent speakers and writers. These essentials are a foundation upon which schools and teachers can adopt additional instructional methodologies, such as the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory’s (NWREL) Six Traits of Writing (<http://www.nwrel.org/assessment/departments>).

The essential components of the teaching approach to language arts are outlined below.

The Shurley Method:

Students need to understand the mechanics and the linguistic characteristics of their language. The Harbor Method utilizes the Shurley Method because the results of this method have been well-documented. This prepares students to be excellent writers and users of their language as well as more astute learners of foreign languages. The Harbor Method incorporates one to two Shurley sentences every day. Depending upon the grade level, teachers may decide to expand this minimal requirement depending upon the curriculum and student need. Teachers need to develop their skill and comfort with strategies specified in the method. Practice, practice and more practice will result in skillful

use. Students are very involved in the instruction. The understanding of the parts of speech is integrated into reading, writing and not practiced in isolation.

## **SCIENCE INSTRUCTION**

At this time, the choice of science curriculum and instruction is at the discretion of each school. Science instruction is delivered as a separate class and lab provided by a qualified science teacher and consistent with the Idaho State Standards.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

The Harbor Method does not prescribe a specific program for Social Studies. Schools should follow the Idaho State Standards for Social Studies as a minimum. Selection of teaching materials is at the discretion of the school. Fourth grade emphasizes Idaho history. Fifth and eighth grades emphasize U.S. history. It is suggested that novels be carefully selected to represent specific periods and curricular emphasis. Concepts should be included on the *Concept Board* for review.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

Special Education Services are provided to any student whose needs can not be fully met, as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The Harbor School Method <sup>TM</sup> when implemented as outlined minimizes student misconduct and maximizes student learning.

Students on Individual Education Plans or Section 504 plans are mainstreamed for much of the school day. Students receive special education services as supplemental to their classroom-based experiences. Students spend the majority of their time in their grade level class, supported by educational assistants who work closely with the special education teacher and classroom teacher to personalize the expectations according to their IEP. The purpose of the special education teacher is to be a resource and support for teachers, students and parents.

The primary goal of special education is to accommodate and adapt as needed in the general education classroom with limited pull-out service. Children cannot expect to be at grade level if they are not exposed to grade level material. Their learning often exceeds adult expectations because they are exposed to accelerated learning, which often does not happen in traditional school programs. They blossom in an environment that is centered on student kindness. All students learn how to relate with one another, regardless of human differences.

## SPECIAL SUBJECT AREAS

Harbor Schools provide instruction in technology, music, art, physical education and foreign language. Harbor Schools design these special area programs to meet their unique scheduling needs. The only requirement is that faculty and instructional programs are consistent with the Harbor philosophy.

### ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

#### *Statewide Testing*



Harbor Schools follow all Idaho State requirements including the state wide testing program. The Idaho State Standards and the State tests are the minimum expectations for Harbor schools. They are the floor, not the ceiling. Harbor schools make sure that what the State tests, is taught and that students are prepared. However, the learning and working environment is not test-centered. Principals are expected to minimize anxiety to prevent undue stress on students, teachers and families. Harbor educators respect the value of state wide tests and prepare their students to take it seriously, to do their best and to excel.

Harbor teachers are confident that the State tested areas are well integrated into their instruction throughout the year.

*Concept Board* assessments are used to monitor students' progress frequently. Student work is closely monitored by teachers. Portfolios are created for each student with samples of their work from each grade level.

### SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- **Citizen of the Week and Citizen of the Month:** Each week, Harbor schools provide the opportunity to recognize a student who exhibits the values that are important to the Harbor Philosophy and Beliefs. Teachers select a student who exhibits kindness, responsibility and helpfulness during the week. Teachers make

this personal to the child receiving it, recognizing their unique traits and special qualities publicly. This is considered a tribute.

Citizen of the Week and Citizen of the Month is never done in Kindergarten. In first grade, every effort is made to give each child the award. This means that toward the end of the year, the first grade teacher ensures that each child understands what this award feels like when they truly earn it. From second grade on, *Citizen of the Week* is truly earned and is not considered an entitlement. The award can be given to the same child more than once, but only after that particular child has received Citizen of the Month. If no one stands out for recognition, the award is not given for that week and the teacher encourages more effort the following week. This award has nothing to do with being the “smartest in the class.” It has to do with responsibility, getting all work done on time, getting to school on time, diligence, persistence even when the subject is not easy for the student, and kindness toward students and adults.

It is important to walk the fine line between recognizing and encouraging outstanding behavior and creating a sense of jealousy and resentment toward the students who receive recognition for their positive behavior. Heartfelt tributes given to *Citizens of the Week* are visible at brief Friday assemblies or sometimes within the classrooms (depending on whether or not a facility is available at a school. The tributes are personalized, meaningful and brief. The assembly is fast paced.

- **Assemblies:** School wide assemblies are intentionally kept to a minimum, limiting distractions to instruction. They are held for special events and to build school-wide community, and have students as the center. Citizen of the Month and music programs are examples of assemblies where students perform and parents are invited to listen.
- **Community service:** Community service learning is an essential component of the Harbor School Method™. We believe that giving to the community promotes the values of civic responsibility, kindness, caring and compassion. It teaches children their responsibility as a contributing member of a democratic society. Children naturally develop through stages in which they are centered on themselves and their immediate perceived needs. Community service teaches students early to be concerned and attentive to the needs of others. For grades 7-8, the Harbor Institute recommends a combined 30 hours of community service arranged by teachers, parent volunteers or community service coordinators, if a school decides to employ them. We recommend 50 hours per year at the high school level. For grades 4-8, Harbor recommends that students participate and contribute to the care of their school. Service to family and school can be incorporated. Cleaning rooms, participating in cafeteria operations, cleaning the grounds of the building, maintaining cleanliness and order are all activities that teach children that they have a responsibility for their environment. They learn early to respect physical property. Schools purchase appropriate cleaning supplies that protect students and facilitate their tasks (sanitary gloves, vacuums, washing supplies, etc.).

- **Field trips:** The Harbor Method uses field trips judiciously as a vehicle for instruction. It is recommended that field trips be carefully planned to teach essential objectives that cannot be effectively taught in any other way. Examples of useful field trips might be in fourth grade to reinforce what they have learned about Idaho history.
- **Dress codes:** These are established by the school board of directors. It is generally recommended that dress be consistent with young men and women who exemplify respect, responsibility, and safety in their lives. When students give presentations, they are encouraged to dress professionally, consistent with expectations for today's work environment.

## GRADE LEVEL STRUCTURE

The Harbor School Method™ has experienced success using a self-contained classroom model for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The Harbor Educational Institute recommends (but does not mandate) that its partner schools follow the same structure for these grade levels. If a middle school model is considered, it is recommended that teachers be experts within their subject areas and have middle school experience. In order to maintain the integrity of the Harbor School Method™, it is imperative that those schools be consistent with the social, behavior, and academic expectations of a Harbor School. If student conduct and/or student learning become noticeably different from the other grade levels, the structure could be a contributing factor. The goal is to maintain the same expectations for conduct and learning that exist in K-6.

## PARENT CONFERENCES

Harbor Schools incorporate the following elements for effective parent-teacher conferences:

- **Provide sufficient notice and invitations to parents**
- **Consider engaging the student in the conference** *as an opportunity* to develop their personal accountability for their school performance. Teacher-led conferences are encouraged.
- **Plan the environment.** The conference experience should be an enjoyable one for everyone. Consider the elements of the environment. This is an opportunity to illustrate Harbor values.
- **Provide relevant meaningful information.** Consider the artifacts that you share and the utility of them to parents and students.
- **Anticipate and come prepared to make suggestions.** If increasing parent engagement and support is an objective, then provide suggestions specifically for parents.
- **Honor the confidentiality of the conference.** Teachers do not discuss other children in the class or school by name.

## References

*The Harbor Method uses findings, concepts and opinions from multiple resources. The references below have influenced our work significantly.*

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**Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School**  
Teacher Evaluation Model

**Board Approval:** 3/14/12

Board Chair: Aaron Clegg *Aaron Clegg* 3/19/12

Superintendent: Jared S. Emfield *J. S. Emfield* 3/16/12

Teacher Rep.: Donica Crocker *Donica Crocker* 3/19/12

Board Clerk: Theresa Adelizzi *T. Adelizzi* 3/16/12